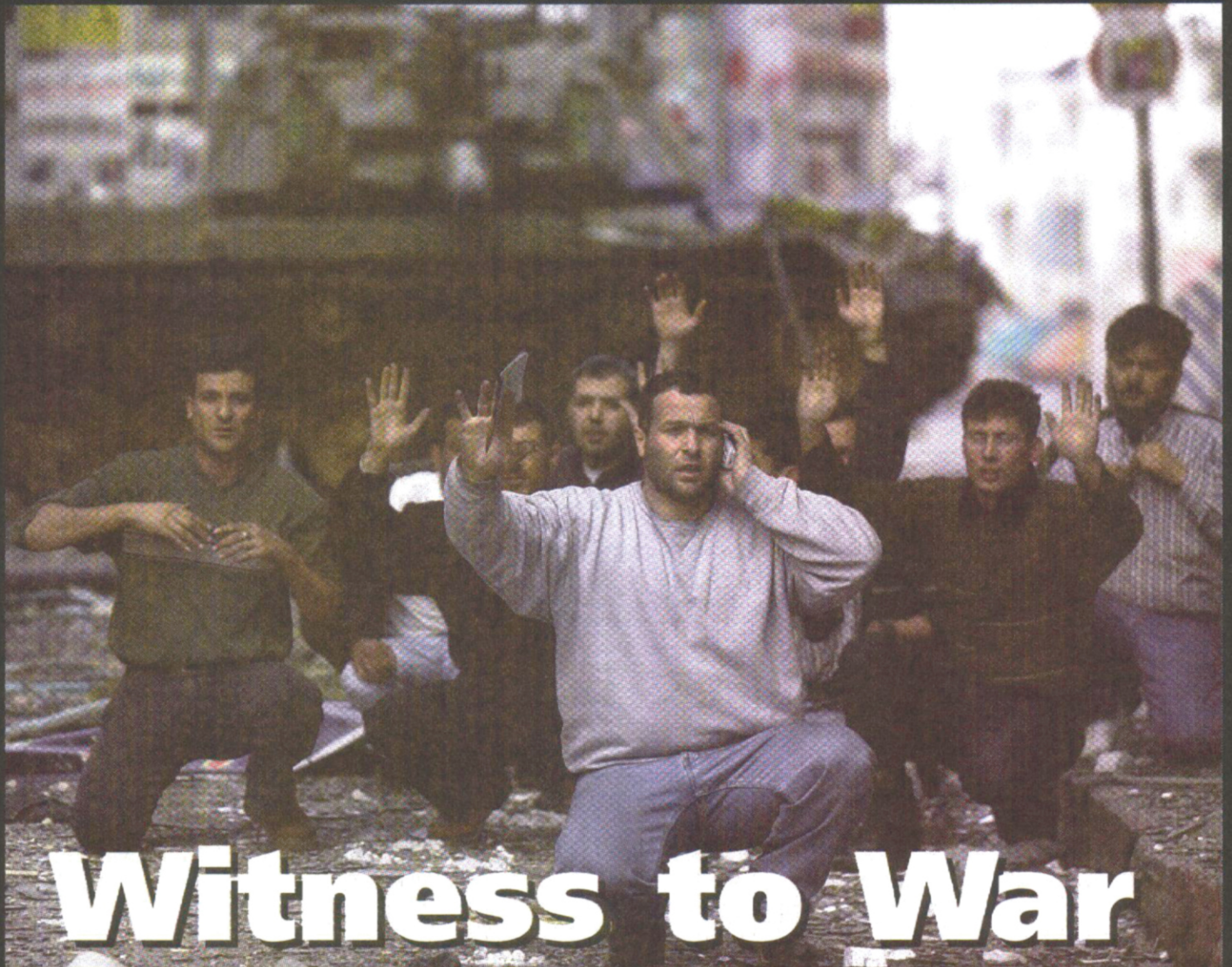


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In These Times

INDEPENDENT NEWS & VIEWS

May 13, 2002



Witness to War

Destruction and despair in the West Bank



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Editorial

Terror in the Territories

Secretary of State Colin Powell started his latest world tour in Morocco, where the king greeted him with a simple question: "Don't you think it would be more important to go to Jerusalem first?"

Much of the world has been asking the very same question since the Israel Defense Forces launched "Operation Protective Wall" and invaded the West Bank on March 29. As Israel's ally and patron—to the tune of \$3 billion in aid annually—the United States is the only country with enough leverage to halt this disaster. Yet as the carnage mounts and the destruction widens, the president has been sitting on his hands.

Yes, under growing international pressure—and weakening support for the impending attack on Saddam Hussein—Bush dispatched Powell on another Middle East jaunt and took a stronger tone on April 4, calling for an Israeli withdrawal and even assuring reporters a few days later that "I meant what I said." The Israelis got the message: We support you fully, but hurry up—you're starting to make us look bad.

As Powell took the scenic route, also stopping off in Spain, Egypt and Jordan (he was due in Israel on April 11, as *In These Times* went to press), the IDF stepped up its onslaught. Tanks and troops pushed further into Nablus, Ramallah and Jenin, cutting off electricity and water and bulldozing houses. Soldiers prevented ambulances from reaching the sick and wounded. Hundreds of Palestinians and dozens of Israeli soldiers have been killed. According to the Israeli daily *Ha'aretz*, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres is privately referring to the Jenin incursion as a "massacre" that will "do us immense damage in the eyes of the world."

Another suicide bomber blew up a bus in Haifa on April 10, killing eight. No one disputes the depravity of these attacks, the tragic loss of innocent life. (Bush is right: The bombers are "not martyrs, they're murderers.") This is the very definition of terrorism. But the Bush administration and most of the U.S. media would have us believe that these terrible attacks somehow excuse Israel's atrocities. Are we really to believe that escalation of the terror against Palestinian civilians will bring peace any closer than the murder of Israelis? That it will make Israel a safer place?

So what are the real goals of Ariel Sharon's campaign? Like Bush's own "war on terror" (and couched in the same language), Sharon is exploiting national fear and outrage to accomplish his own long-held objectives: the utter obliteration of the Oslo peace process, the Palestinian Authority and Yasser Arafat himself. Sharon may succeed, but Israel will be no closer to peace or security. As Gideon Levy asked recently in *Ha'aretz*: "What is the infrastructure of terrorism if not the occupation, the despair and the hatred?"

Yet Bush has reserved most of his ire for Arafat, castigating him for not doing enough to stop the suicide bombers. He probably hasn't. But it's hard to imagine what Washington expects him to do now, under siege in Ramallah with Israeli soldiers in his living room. Why is it that the Palestinians are always being ordered to restrain themselves and police their own occupation, but the occupation itself is never questioned? As the *Independent's* Robert Fisk has observed, while the Palestinians are encouraged to practice nonviolence ("à la Gandhi," in the words of the *New York Times's* Thomas Friedman), the Israelis are called on to deliver "a military blow that shows terror will not pay" (Friedman again).

Yet even when "peace activists" like the ones profiled in this issue practice nonviolent

"What is the infrastructure of terrorism, if not the occupation, the despair and the hatred?"

resistance, they are widely dismissed as propagandists, hypocrites, even traitors. Critics ask: Why aren't they also shielding the cafes and discos of Tel Aviv? A better question: When did the Palestinians become so dehumanized that it's only shocking when unarmed Europeans are shot in the street?

The entire situation is all the more tragic because the outlines of a peaceful, political solution are clear: Israel, roughly within its 1967 borders, alongside an independent, demilitarized Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza. The Israeli occupation must end, and the settlements must be dismantled. The Palestinians will have to relinquish the "right of return" (but not some form of compensation). A U.S.-led peacekeeping force will be required. Neither side will be fully satisfied. Just look at the alternative.

—Craig Aaron

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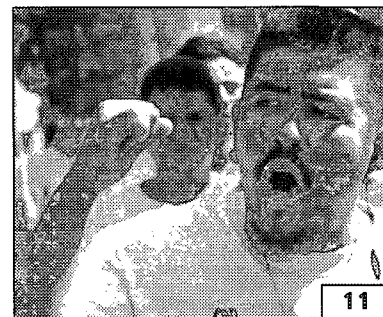
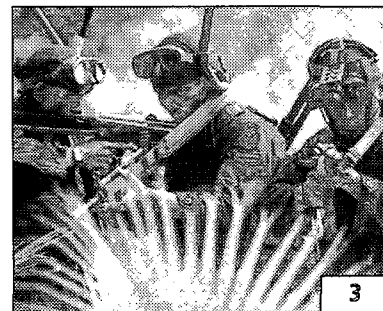
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By David Moberg

Studs Terkel turns 90.

Cover photo by Scott Nelson/Getty



Sick Joke of the Year

David Moberg may want to tone up his pro-union credentials ("Steeling Home," April 15), but there are far better ways than by supporting President Bush's new tariffs on imported steel as "legitimate": They are purely political, aimed at securing the steel-producing states for his 2004 re-election. Neither will they help steelworkers. If the "voluntary export restraints" on Japanese automobile exports in the '80s are any precedent, global restructuring of steel will go on, workers will lose their jobs here and elsewhere, and the tariffs will do more to fatten industry profits in the United States than to protect, let alone generate, jobs.

Bush's tariffs will also increase prices for a range of steel-using industries, from automobiles to construction, with consumers bearing the costs. The steel-producing states will suffer as well. The European Union has targeted them for retaliation, by putting tariffs on a range of their products, from Harley Davidson motorbikes to Tropicana fruit juices—a predictable response in an age when the United States is no longer the unchallengeable economic titan of the world.

It is baffling that someone like Moberg can separate Bush's tariffs from the dangerous and frightening unilateralism that pervades everything he does. To claim that these tariffs, coming from this administration, may lead toward addressing "failures of global economic policy" sounds like the sick joke of the year.

Richard B. Du Boff
Haverford, Pennsylvania

Vandals not Vanguard

David Graeber still doesn't get it when he writes, "How many people ... would argue that it's morally wrong to break a piece of glass that doesn't belong to you ... if that action can seriously further the cause of human freedom in some way?" ("Letters," April 15).

The vandalism in Seattle, rather than "seriously furthering" the anti-corporate globalization cause, instead caused it great harm. We can persuade middle-class Americans that corporate globalization harms them. Their support is required if we are to defeat corporate globalization. But middle-class America simply will not support a movement that includes vandalism as a legitimate strategy.

The alternative to vandalism is not "the same old passive strategies," as Graeber claims. In Seattle, thousands of (mostly) young people linked arms to block access to the WTO meeting site. Like those of an earlier generation who sat in at lunch counters, they main-

tained their dignity and showed great personal courage. They, not the vandals, shut down the meeting. And, like those who sat in at lunch counters, they, not the vandals, will be the ones who will persuade the larger public that our cause is just.

Robert Baillie
Loveland, Colorado

Fathers, Where Art Thou?

After reading Christopher Tasy's response regarding Carl Bromley's article on Pope John Paul II ("Letters," April 1), it behooved me to offer some fun facts for the record.

Tasy makes the claim, with no source cited, that ordinations to the Catholic priesthood "are up 75 percent in John Paul II's pontificate, compared to those before he was elected." Maybe that's true in Poland (we don't have the sources here on that), but let's take a very well-sourced look at the United States. According to the National Conference of Catholic Bishops' Study on the Impact of Fewer Priests, commissioned in 1998, the number of seminarians has declined from 6,602 in 1974 (four years before John Paul II became pope) to 3,474 in 2000. Those are the guys—and we mean guys—who are on the road to ordination.

Among other things in the study: Between 1950 and 2000, the Catholic population of the United States increased by a whopping 107 percent, while the total number of priests increased by only 6 percent. At the same time, the average age of priests in the United States has increased to the point where the

country now has more priests over the age of 90 than under the age of 30.

If ordinations had been rising wildly, by 75 percent as Tasy states, it seems quite unlikely that the Catholic bishops would have commissioned such a study with the snazzy title, and then followed up with a discussion on it in front of non-bishop ears, as they did last June.

Kate DeSmet
Detroit

Clarification

In "Seeds of Destruction" (April 1), a statement that "two-thirds of the state laws related to biotechnology enacted last year were promoted by biotechnology companies and targeted activists vandalizing GM crops or animals" was wrongly attributed to the Pew Initiative on Food and Biotechnology. Pew did find that 70 percent of the bills were related to crop destruction. However, the fact that the bills were promoted by biotech companies came from several other sources. We regret any confusion.

Third Party Web Debate

In *These Times*' Web site, inthesetimes.com, features Green Party Political Coordinator Dean Myerson, Mitch Freedman, Eli Beckerman, Monica Griffin and others responding to G. William Domhoff's essay "Greens or Green (Egalitarian) Democrats?"

Terry LaBan



Here We Go Again

U.S. considers renewing military ties to Indonesia

By Rachel Rinaldo

With lush volcanic mountains rising out of sapphire seas, the Indonesian island of Sulawesi is stunningly beautiful. In recent years, however, Sulawesi's natural beauty has been overshadowed by conflict in Poso, a small city at its center. Now, just as a fragile peace agreement has calmed violence in Poso and the surrounding areas, the island is becoming one of many justifications for the United States to renew its support for the Indonesian military.

As part of its war on terrorism, the American military has been eager to restore relations with its Indonesian counterpart. Those ties were cut off after military violence in East Timor in 1999, but are slowly being restored. Only Congress can renew direct funding for foreign military training, but there are signs the move is being considered.

In late March, U.S. Sens. Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii) and Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) traveled to Indonesia to discuss military cooperation with Vice President Hamzah Haz. And in late April, senior officials from the State and Defense Departments will attend a two-day forum with Indonesian officials to evaluate security cooperation between the two countries, along with the possibility of restoring full military ties. "The Bush administration is capitalizing on the argument of terror to do what they already wanted to do," says Karen Orenstein, Washington Coordinator for the East Timor Action Network. "They're just speeding it up."

Poso has experienced outbreaks of fighting since late 1998, when a dispute between Christian and Muslim youths sparked vigilante attacks. More than a thousand people have been killed, and more than 50,000 refugees remain scattered throughout several towns in the area.

The most recent fighting erupted in late November and early December, when Muslims attacked Christian villages near Poso. By the time the violence had sub-



Indonesia's military: training for further human rights violations?

sided, at least 100 people were dead, thousands had fled, and hundreds of homes and other buildings had been destroyed.

In late December, government intervention persuaded both sides to sign a peace accord that appears to be holding, for now.

Experts warn that the bloodshed in Poso is not a simple religious conflict, and say that only a careful look at history can explain the violence there. In the mid-'70s, the government of General Suharto opened the Poso area to *transmigrasi*, a national policy of moving people from the crowded islands of Java and Sumatra to less populated areas. *Transmigrasi* brought in large numbers of mainly Muslim outsiders to a previously isolated, mostly Christian area.

By the '90s, many Christians felt disadvantaged and believed Muslims were getting richer faster. "The colonial regime created these divisions," says Lorraine Aragon, an anthropologist at East Carolina University, "but the policies of Suharto tried to suppress the problems, never coped with them, and [ended up] exacerbating them."

After the Suharto regime fell in 1998, tensions were renewed. The unsteady governments of B.J. Habibie and Abdurrahman Wahid did little to resolve them. Finally, in early December, Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri sent more than 2,000 soldiers and police to Poso, dampening the violence.

Despite the peace accord, many are too wary of the Indonesian military's shoddy human rights record to take much solace in its presence in Sulawesi. The military and police are known for taking sides in local conflicts. "The Indonesian military is the biggest source of terror to its own people," Orenstein says.

Human rights violations by the Indonesian military are well-documented, but the Bush administration seems likely to brush them aside. Most infamously, senior military officials are suspected of directing the militia-led brutality in East Timor following the province's vote for independence in August 1999. Hundreds were killed, and more than 250,000 civilians were forced into neighboring West Timor. Eighteen mid-level officers are currently on trial in a special human rights court in Jakarta for their role in the invasion, but there are no plans to hold accountable the most senior military officers, some of whom now hold important government positions.

The arrival of the radical Muslim group Laskar Jihad in Poso last July only further complicates matters. In recent months, there has been much debate over whether Laskar Jihad has links to al-Qaeda. Formed in 2000, the group is known for its involvement in the beleaguered province of Maluku, where 9,000 people have died in fighting in the past three years. A similar, yet shakier, peace agree-

ment was signed there in February, but Laskar Jihad still claims to have thousands of fighters in Central Sulawesi, Maluku and other areas.

The chief of Indonesia's Intelligence Agency, A.M. Hendropriyono, stated in mid-December that al-Qaeda once had a training camp near Poso. But other top Indonesian officials have denied reports of al-Qaeda connections. While there have been arrests of a number of Indonesians said to be part of a terror ring, clear links between Indonesia and al-Qaeda remain elusive.

Liem Soei Liong, a member of TAPOL, a group campaigning for human rights in Indonesia, warns that different wings of the Indonesian military have their own agendas. "Hendropriyono will use the presence of Laskar Jihad in Poso as proof of the existence of al-Qaeda in Indonesia," he says, "[because] he is pushing for the full restoration of relations between the Pentagon and the Indonesian military." The CIA and State Department have yet to find solid evidence of an al-Qaeda presence in Indonesia, Liong says. Nevertheless, "Hendropriyono's tough approach will likely impress hard-liners in Washington."

In the meantime, the Pentagon has found ways around the limitations, funding training of the Indonesian military and police from the recently created Regional Defense Counter-Terrorism Fellowship program, which has no restrictions on which countries can participate. "Over the past year, the Pentagon has rewarded the Indonesian military with training and increased contacts," Orenstein says, "but human rights conditions in Indonesia continue to deteriorate."

In March, the Bush administration requested \$16 million in supplemental appropriations for training Indonesian military and civilian personnel, saying the money was intended for humanitarian, peacekeeping and counter-terrorism initiatives.

Orenstein and others warn that U.S. support gives the Indonesian military legitimacy and that it will capitalize on the war on terrorism to deal harshly with political opponents. Sulawesi is again relatively quiet, but it seems unlikely that the military presence will end or that the recent strife will fade away entirely. The problems here did not begin in 1998, Aragon adds: "The inequities go back much further." ■

Who's Counting?

U.S. plan to eradicate coca crops in Bolivia fails miserably

By Benjamin Kunkel and Lisa Kunkel

COCHABAMBA, BOLIVIA—The lush, rugged Chapare region of Bolivia is home to some 35,000 families engaged in growing coca, a plant that has been cultivated here since human settlement. Over the past 14 years, the Chapare has also been the site of U.S.-sponsored efforts by the Bolivian government to eradicate coca. This campaign, now called Plan Dignity, intensified in 1998 and seemed successful in December 2000, when the Bolivian government announced the total elimination of coca in the region.

But that was only if you didn't look too closely. A month later, officials stated that 1,400 acres of coca had been missed. Nine months later, the number of acres under cultivation was estimated at 9,900, and the potential Bolivian contribution to the world cocaine market was placed at 66 tons, or 6 million grams.

The other apparent success on this front of the Andean drug war has been, in the words of the State Department, to "enable farmers to support themselves and their families without the need to cultivate coca." The State Department's annual International Narcotics Control Strategy Report claims that 16,167 families have received American assistance to grow alternative crops, such as bananas, macadamia nuts and oranges. But the Bolivian government gives the number as 12,000, and many families growing other crops have preserved their coca as well. As farmer Jorge Cala Tito says, "Surely I'm among the 12,000 beneficiaries the minister has indicated, but I can tell you that I still have coca because that is our only source of survival."

Coca is a hearty plant, resistant to rotting and disease. Its use and sale as a dried leaf is traditional and legal in Bolivia; refined into cocaine, it has proved an enduringly popular product, particularly in the United States. Coca thrives and so do its markets—advantages not enjoyed by anything else Chapare farmers might grow.

In December, when growers' unions set up roadblocks to protest the elimination

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

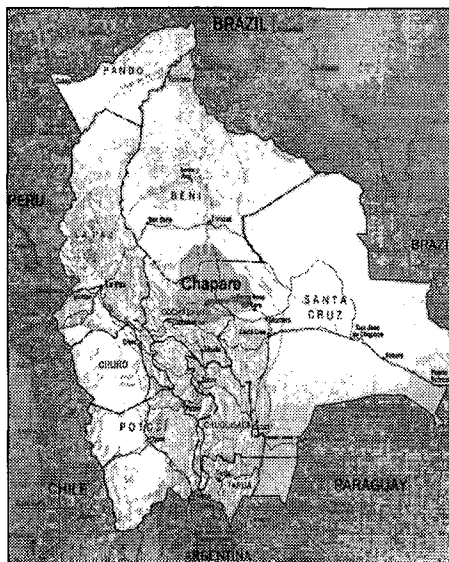


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of their coca and therefore their livelihoods, they also dumped rotting pineapples, bananas and other fruits by the roadside. These crops may be legal, but Bolivia lacks the infrastructure to transport them reliably, and the international economy—with its mixture of agricultural protectionism and unstable commodity prices—can't ensure regular access to markets at a decent price.

As in the past, the roadblocks and other protests led to bloody clashes between farmers and security forces. Tensions increased when the government issued a decree banning the cultivation of all Chapare coca. In the past six months, 10 coca growers and four soldiers have been killed, and more than 350 protesters have been injured or detained. Six deaths came over three days in January with the closure of the Sacaba coca market, one of 16 markets the United States would like to see closed. In a measure of the farmers' desperation, many of the wounded were found to be suffering from acute malnutrition.

At least three protesters were shot and killed by members of the Expeditionary Task Force, an irregular group of 1,500 soldiers devoted to coca eradication, under Bolivian command but receiving



their salaries from the Narcotic Affairs Section of the local U.S. Embassy. These deaths are being investigated, not by a civilian court and in accordance with Bolivian law, but by a military tribunal. Such tribunals have yet to find any soldier responsible for the use of excessive force or to discover a single instance of the widespread use of torture noted by Amnesty International in 2001.

Yet the Bolivian government may have less tolerance for carnage than the State Department does. On February 9, the coca growers' unions and the government of President Jorge Quiroga reached an uneasy peace agreement. The coca-growing ban has been suspended, allowing farmers to grow some coca legally, and the families of injured or killed farmers are to be compensated. Despite American displeasure, Quiroga's government may not attempt to close more coca markets before elections in June.

Still, the peace is fragile. The U.S. interest in the elimination of coca and the farmers' need to subsist can't currently be reconciled, and the Bolivian government sits anxiously in the middle, always betraying either its people or its patron. The drug war continues to torment Bolivia while retaining, for the American government, its ritual character.

All efforts to eliminate coca in the Andean region thus far have failed miserably. When asked about the supply of cocaine to the United States, Randy Beers, assistant secretary for international narcotics and law enforcement, says: "I cannot tell you at this point in time, based on available information, that the amount of cocaine that comes into the United States is less." ■

IRS Targets Working Poor for Tax Audits

While audits of the wealthy and corporations have gone into a sharp, 14-year decline, audits of the working poor increased 48.6 percent last year.

Since 1995, the Internal Revenue Service has focused the majority of its tax fraud investigations on the working poor. And in the past year, the Bush administration has aggressively stepped up its investigation. IRS Commissioner Charles Rossotti admitted in congressional testimony in February. People applying for the Earned Income Tax Credit, a payment to low-income families, are now more likely to be audited than almost any other single taxpayer. At the same time, audits of the wealthiest earners have sharply decreased.

Small businesses owners making less than \$25,000 a year had a 1 in 37 chance of being audited last year. Tax filers applying for the EITC had a 1 in 47 chance. In comparison, a person making more than \$100,000 in 2000 had a 1 in 208 chance of being audited. In 1988, that number was 1 in 9.

The IRS says investigation of the lowest-income earners is intended to ward off fraud among those receiving the EITC, which can range from \$300 to \$4,000. Rep. Ed Towns (D-New York) says that fraud among those applying for the EITC is not so much a problem as is the complexity of forms required to apply for it. "We think that instead of increasing audits, they should be increasing education and informing people who are filing taxes how the process

works," Towns' spokesman says. "These are mistakes. These are not things people should be audited about."

The House Ways and Means Committee oversees IRS funding. Rep. Amo Houghton (R-New York), former chairman of Corning Glass, is the committee's chairman, and the wealthiest member of Congress. In response to questioning from a *New York Times* reporter, Houghton wondered "whether we have enough money going to the IRS to do the job at the same level as in the past."

A20 Gears Up for Action

As *In These Times* went to press, organizers were preparing for what may be the largest demonstration in the United States since September 11. The weekend of April 20 to 21, hundreds of groups are planning to travel to Washington for what promises to be a remarkably diverse set of demonstrations.

Not only will the IMF and World Bank hold their spring meetings that weekend, but Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon will be in town on April 22. Police say they are preparing for tens of thousands of protesters, and will use the same crowd-control tactics as in the past, including roadblocks and armor-clad "civil disturbance units." Organizers themselves predict anywhere from 10,000 to 40,000 people will attend, and say much of the protest will focus on anti-war activities, criticism of the recent curtailment of civil liberties and support for Palestinians.

—Kristie Reilly

Nuclear Fallout

Testing has killed thousands, a new study shows

By Jeffrey St. Clair

The Cold War may be over, but its legacy remains quite hot—and deadly. A new report estimates that fallout from open-air nuclear testing has killed more than 15,000 Americans and will cause at least 80,000 cancers.

In the '50s, when the United States selected the Shoshone lands in the Nevada desert as the location for testing nuclear weapons, President Harry Truman said he wanted someplace remote enough that Americans wouldn't worry about the government "shooting bombs in their backyards." Ominously, there is no place on earth remote enough to safely test nuclear weapons. Indeed, the report concludes that nuclear testing has exposed to

radiation nearly everyone who has resided in the United States since 1951.

The new report, conducted by the National Cancer Institute and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (NCI/CDC), is remarkable for several reasons, not least because it represents the first time the U.S. government has released an assessment of the spread and consequences to human health of radioactive fallout from global nuclear testing. It's also the first time that the government has admitted that a substantial number of cancer deaths nationwide have been caused by nuclear testing.

The report was commissioned by Congress in 1998 following public uproar over a 1997 study by the NCI that investigated the fallout of only one radionuclide, iodine-131, and its link to at least 11,300 cases of thyroid cancers among Americans. Iodine-131 was dropped as fallout across dairy country, where it was consumed by cows and goats and concentrated in their milk.

This examination of global fallout is much broader, tracking, among other things, exposure to cesium-137. In addition

to charting radiation from the Nevada Test Site, the NCI/CDC study also looked at fallout from U.S. tests in the Marshall Islands and Johnson Atoll, British explosions at the Christmas Islands, and Soviet testing at Semipalatinsk and Novaya Zemlya.

The irradiation of the global environment has been a uniquely cooperative endeavor, with all of the world's nuclear superpowers contributing to the toll. The United States has carried out 1,030 nuclear weapons tests (the last on September 23, 1993); the former Soviet Union: 715 tests; France: 210 tests; England: 45 tests; China: 45 tests.

The body count from fallout is insidious, largely hidden in the slow but relentless accumulation of cancers, such as thyroid (2,500 deaths), leukemia (550 deaths) and radiogenic cancers from both internal and external exposure (17,050 deaths). The report calculated the risk of contracting each cancer based on the level of exposure to radioactive materials and the associated risk factor over time.

"This report and other official data show that hot spots—areas of intense radiation—

Why Hate Dog People? 6.7

Who's a frisky puppy? Who is? Dakota's a big, frisky puppy dog. Yes, he is.

Dakota clamped his gleaming choppers on a tyke named Taylor in a grocery store parking lot in Menifee, California, and dragged him 20 feet while the boy's mom screamed for help.

But Dakota just wanted to play, maintains his owner, Dave Natali. Natali runs the Wolf Wildlife Education program, through which he brings wild animals to area schools to present to kids. Dakota, it turns out, is a wolf hybrid. Natali says the dog-wolf just wanted some of Taylor's ice cream.

Taylor was treated for puncture wounds and abrasions. Animal control officials quarantined the beast, and hearings will be held to weigh taking away Natali's right to own dogs again. This bums out Natali, who told The Associated Press that wild animals are "part of my religious and cultural beliefs."

Said beliefs might be put aside, however, on the question of neutering Dakota, which Natali promises

will simmer him down a bit, if the law just gives him another chance.

More Enron Fun 7.5

Everybody's got a favorite Enron anecdote; here's mine. It's about Chung Wu, who is that rarest of specimens, the stock broker who thinks for himself. He worked for UBS Paine Webber in Houston, and he counted Enron employees among his customers.

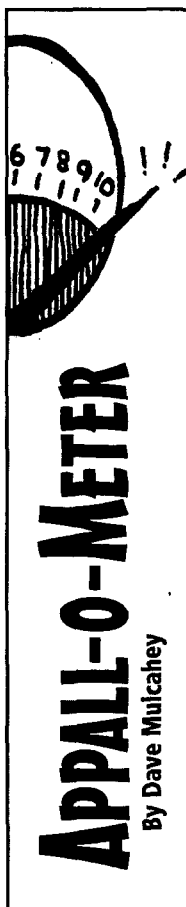
While Paine Webber's stock "analysts" had been touting Enron's stock to the heavens, good old Chung was doing his own homework, according to a story in the *Chicago Sun-Times*. In August, when Enron was trading at \$36, he e-mailed 73 customers, telling them to sell. "Time is value," he wrote, "and waiting to make a decision would cost you a fortune."

Well, Enron honchos got hold of the e-mail, called the broker's boss, and pitched a hissy fit. Enron executive Mary Joyce made it clear she wanted "strong disciplinary action

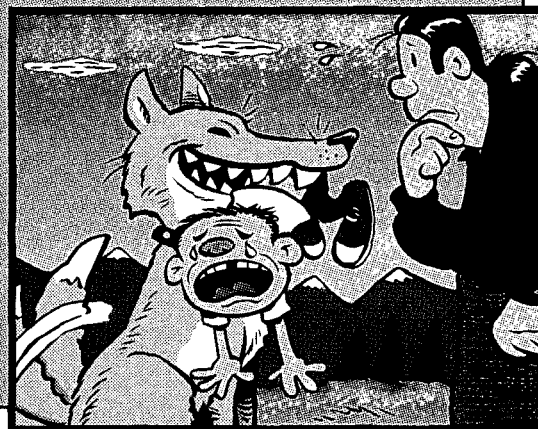
taken." The ax fell on poor Chung Wu that very day. A Paine Webber big shot sent e-mail to Wu's clients retracting the broker's advice and reiterating the firm's "strong buy" recommendation on Enron.

You already know the unpleasantness awaiting the clients who didn't cop to Wu's kindly tip. A bunch of them are now suing Paine Webber. The suit claims, among other revealing tidbits, that boardroom wags at the firm joked about Enron circling the drain while they dumped shares for company insiders.

There aren't enough jails to hold the SOB's, even in Texas.



By Dave Mulcahey



TERRY LABAN

occurred thousands of miles away from the test sites," says Dr. Arjun Makhijani, president of the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research. "Hot spots due to testing in Nevada occurred as far away as New York and Maine. Hot spots from U.S. Pacific-area and Soviet testing were scattered across the United States from California to New Hampshire." Indeed, some of the radioactive materials from those tests still circulate in the atmosphere.

Even so, the conclusions are far from comprehensive. The CDC/NCI study only included tests conducted from 1951 through 1962. That means that it excluded most French atmospheric testing in the Pacific, pre-1951 testing in the Marshall Islands, the 1945 New Mexico tests, and many others, including the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings. The fallout statistics also don't account for the deaths and illnesses of other civilians, including uranium miners, nuclear plant workers and others who live near Hanford, Washington, and Rocky Flats, Colorado, where nuclear weapons were produced until the late '80s.

The CDC/NCI study has been gathering dust for at least six months, as the Bush administration and Congress tussled over how to control the import of its grim conclusions. Even in the '50s, the Pentagon and the old Atomic Energy Commission



A 1946 test in Bikini Atoll: Fallout from such nuclear tests has contaminated the globe.

knew that radiation from explosions at the Nevada Test Site was spreading across the country and into Canada and Mexico. Yet they largely chose to conceal this information from the public. And even though the United States is grievously tardy in taking responsibility for inflicting death on its own people, it is ahead of the other nuclear-testing nations, which have remained morbidly quiet on the subject.

Bush's new Nuclear Posture Review calls for the development and testing of a new

generation of nuclear weapons, the so-called bunker-busters. The plan would not only violate the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (not yet ratified by the United States), but it would put another generation at risk. "While the United States is making every effort to maintain the nuclear stockpile without additional nuclear testing," Defense Department strategists warned in the review submitted to Congress by the Pentagon in January, "this may not be possible for the indefinite future." ■

Far-right Cartoonist Strikes Again

By Eleanor Bader

Feminists across the country are incensed over a recent cartoon by Pulitzer Prize-winner Michael Ramirez. The graphic shows a National Organization for Women member supporting Andrea Yates, the mentally ill Texas woman recently convicted of drowning her five children (see illustration, right). Letters to the editor at the *Los Angeles Times* and *St. Petersburg Times*—the two newspapers that ran the piece—call it “hate filled,” “outrageously offensive,” “pure stupidity,” “disgusting,” “slanderous,” “malicious” and “mean-spirited and just plain wrong.” More than 550 publications routinely run Ramirez’ syndicated drawings.

"The [Yates] case had nothing to do with abortion," says NOW Action Vice President Olga Vives. "Andrea Yates was ill, and the health care system failed her. For Ramirez to use this tragedy to attack

NOW and advance his own anti-choice agenda is not just irresponsible, it's bad journalism."

This is not the first time Ramirez has come out with patently offensive material—in fact, his views have ruffled progressives for nearly 20 years. The proud right-winger has been repeatedly lambasted by groups including the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation for his homophobic art. An illustration published by the *Los Angeles Times* in 2000 equated homosexuality with bestiality. A year later, another cartoon depicted gay and bisexual men as vectors of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

The *Los Angeles Times* says Ramirez's work brings "balance" to their pages—but thousands of readers disagree. "The cartoon is hate-mongering," says Junior Bridge.



professor of media studies at George Mason University, "and fuels an irrational hatred of feminists and pro-choice people."

In these *Times* readers can join the fray by writing the *Los Angeles Times* (letters@latimes.com) or the *St. Petersburg Times* (letters@sptimes.com), or calling the cartoonist's syndicator: (619) 293-1818.

By Mary Abowd

Obaid says she would like to see Muslim women everywhere enjoy similar opportunities in education and economic and political empowerment. To help shake Western stereotypes, she cites the UNESCO Statistical Yearbook. In 1993-94, the percentage of women teaching in universities or equivalent institutions in Egypt was higher than in either France or Canada. And in 1996, Turkey and Syria both had a far higher percentage

Obaid says her organization's hefty agenda has led to the prevention of



O'baid remains undaunted by all the hubbub. "Everything we have learned shows that when women are empowered—through better laws, health care and education—the benefits go far beyond the individual," O'baid says. "Families are better off, and so are nations." ■

The Sludge Report

By Joel Bleifuss

Sewage sludge, the toxic byproduct of the nation's sewage treatment facilities, continues to be spread across the American countryside as an EPA-defined form of fertilizer.

I first wrote about this pernicious form of land-based dumping in 1995. Since then a few things have changed on the sludge front. The Merriam-Webster dictionary now contains "biosolids," the EPA and the waste treatment industry having convinced the editors that this was an actual word and not a PR firm's attempt to linguistically detoxify "sludge."

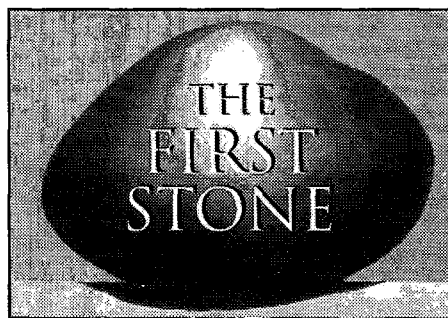
Yet no ameliorative wordplay can mask the fact that sewage sludge is the same old shit, an amalgam of everything that flows from homes and industries down the drain into municipal sewer systems. The Sierra Club puts it this way: "Urban sludges are a highly complex, unpredictable biologically active mixture of organic material and human pathogens that contain thousands of industrial waste products, including dozens of carcinogens, hormone disrupting chemicals, toxic metals, dioxins, radionuclides and other persistent bioaccumulative poisons."

It's good news that one of the national environmental organizations has taken a stand on the disposal of sludge by renaming it fertilizer. More than half of the sewage sludge produced each year in the United States—3.5 million metric tons—is spread on agricultural land, according to the EPA. Yet the environmental dangers posed by this practice have not received the national attention they deserve. Most opposition to sludge dumping is taking place on the local level, particularly in communities where residents have become ill and even died after exposure to the sludge-based fertilizer.

In Greenland, New Hampshire, a number of residents fell ill after biosolids were spread on neighboring farmland by Synagro Technologies Inc., one of the nation's largest sludge disposers. Shayne Conner, a 26-year-old, failed to recover and died of a *Staphylococcus aureus* infection. His family filed suit and, in January, reached an out-of-court settlement. Synagro paid them an undisclosed sum to

drop their suit, sign a gag order and publicly agree that the scientific evidence, as provided in testimony from EPA scientist David L. Lewis, did not prove that his exposure to sludge had contributed to Conner's death.

The settlement language in the Conner case is the latest chapter in an ongoing industry and EPA effort to discredit Lewis.



His warnings about the dangers of land-based disposal of sludge, if widely publicized, could cost the waste disposal industry millions of dollars.

Lewis is a microbiologist at the EPA's own National Exposure Research Laboratory in Athens, Georgia. In 1992, he discovered that a common method of sterilizing dental instruments failed to kill the HIV virus, and, as a result, some patients were contracting AIDS at their dentist's office. Lewis is now trying to alert the public to the dangers posed by sludge-born human pathogens such as *Staphylococcus aureus*. In Pennsylvania, two children have died of *Staphylococcus aureus* infections after being exposed to sewage sludge.

In 1999, the British journal *Nature* published a paper by Lewis, which concluded that the land application of sewage sludge could alter soil chemistry and elevate the risks posed by agricultural pesticides. In response, the EPA removed the director of the Athens laboratory because she had approved the publication of Lewis' research, according to a Labor Department investigation.

After hearings by the House Science Committee, the director was reinstated, and she subsequently approved a two-year

study by Lewis of nine sludge-exposed communities whose residents reported a high incidence of *Staphylococcus aureus* infections. (Lewis presented some of the results of that study in November at a sludge conference sponsored by Boston University's School of Public Health, and, indeed, he found a correlation between sludge application and human illness.)

Last year, Lewis' supervisors cleared his research for submission to scientific journals. Subsequently, Lewis learned that a Washington EPA official had met with an executive vice president of Synagro to figure out a way to stop the publication of his findings. At the time, Lewis was an unpaid expert witness in the suit against Synagro for the death of Shayne Conner.

The judge in that case ruled that the Washington meeting was improper and ordered Synagro to keep Lewis' paper confidential until it was published in a peer-reviewed journal. So Synagro and the EPA changed tactics and, in September, distributed an unsigned report on Synagro letterhead titled "Analysis of David Lewis' Theories Regarding Biosolids," which contained a multitude of false and misleading statements.

Lewis responded to this harassment by seeking help from the National Whistleblower Center, which filed a

In Pennsylvania, two children have died of *Staphylococcus* infections after exposure to sewage sludge.

complaint with the EPA Inspector General on his behalf. On March 28, the Inspector General's office released its report, stating, "The EPA cannot assure the public that current land application practices [of sewage sludge] are protective of human health and the environment."

That conclusion is one that the National Academy of Sciences will have to consider in its current reassessment of the risks posed by the EPA's sludge policy. For his part, Lewis feels vindicated. "The report," he says, "shows that EPA didn't get the science right and has no idea how much the public health and the environment may have suffered as a result." ■

Phoenix Ascending

By Ana Marie Cox

Compared to the millions spent on lobbying by defense contractors, tobacco companies and energy conglomerates, the \$300,000 that came out of the pockets of for-profit higher education corporations in the 2000 election doesn't seem like it would buy very much. But for-profits have found a bargain.

In late March, the Senate confirmed Sally Stroup as assistant secretary for the office of postsecondary education, making her the nation's chief higher-ed policymaker. Prior to that, Stroup was the top lobbyist for the Apollo Group, owner of the 154-campus University of Phoenix and the main force behind the industry's phenomenal growth. Today, there are 672 for-profit colleges in the United States; they make up about 17 percent of all institutions of higher education. Analysts predict this segment will grow by about 10 percent a year, until it finally displaces nonprofit education—or what for-profits call the “last remaining government monopoly in the world.”

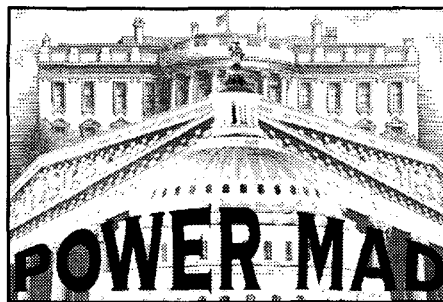
The Apollo Group has been the utmost beneficiary of this boom. The business degree and technically oriented University of Phoenix enrolls 116,000 students at its campuses and “learning centers,” making it the largest private university—for-profit or not—in the country. (Even more students are enrolled in the Apollo Group's “distance education” division, the University of Phoenix online). The company has a \$3 billion market value, and their 1994 IPO has given initial investors a 500 percent return.

Really, the only dim spot in the Apollo group's bright future lies with the power of pesky government regulations and regional accreditors, both of which have the power to cut off the for-profits' access to Title IV federal loans and grants, the 1964 program founded with the express purpose of providing financial assistance to low-income students who would not otherwise be able to pursue a college education.

Without Title IV funds, few for-profits could afford to exist—their students are about twice as likely to receive federal aid than students at nonprofits. And they get a lot of it: At the two-year level, for-profit schools get an average of \$6,974 in aid per student. Public junior colleges get \$2,609.

For education corporations, students are simply a conduit for their piece of the \$35 billion federal loan and grant jackpot.

The Apollo Group is particularly motivated to loosen the Title IV restrictions. In 2000, an Education Department audit of the \$339 million in loans and \$9 million in Pell Grants distributed by the University of Phoenix found that the school failed to meet some basic standards, including giv-



ing the students at least 12 hours of instructional time per week. Apollo paid out \$6 million fines and returned more than \$50 million in ill-gotten loans and grants.

That's where Stroup can make a difference. Before joining Apollo, Stroup advised the House Committee on Education and the Workforce from 1993 to 2001. She was instrumental in helping to draft the 1998 reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, a piece of legislation that handed for-profits several victories: It made it easier to appeal penalization on loan defaults, it made surprise accreditation visits optional, and it redefined “institutions of higher education” to include for-profits rather than defining them as a separate category. The act also created a special proprietary schools liaison with the Education Department, a privilege previously reserved for historically black universities and community colleges.

Now, Stroup and Laura Palmer Noone—the Phoenix president who last year was appointed to the National Advisory Board on Institutional Quality and Integrity—are in a position to put the finishing touches on what is essentially the deregulation of higher education. For-profits would like to get rid of the minimum number of hours per week required for a student to qualify for aid.

They also want to abolish a federal law that prohibits colleges from providing bonuses or other incentive payments to admissions officers or financial-aid administrators for enrolling students. According to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, lobbyists for for-profits say that “the law does not allow employees to be financially rewarded for exceptional performance.” That is sort of the point, though, as the regulation was created in response to recruiters from diploma mills, who earned such bonuses by enrolling students out of unemployment centers.

But the most important of the for-profit initiatives is the push to revise Education Department rules stipulating that at least 10 percent of a for-profits' income must come from sources other than federal aid. Once this restriction is lifted, the proprietary schools are in a position to siphon off a much larger portion of the aid available to all schools—taking a bigger bite out of a program that is the lifeblood of resource-poor public colleges. None of these measures would improve the quality of education available at a place like the University of Phoenix, but they would improve the Apollo Group's bottom line.

More troubling, perhaps, is the atmosphere in which this push to deregulate is being made. The for-profits' ethos is neatly paralleled by the desires of college students

For-profit colleges want to siphon off aid that is the lifeblood of resource-poor public schools.

in general. A 2001 survey conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA asked more than 200,000 students to rank the reasons they decided to go to college. Out of 20 goals they hoped to achieve, 73.4 percent ranked “being very well off financially” first.

And John Sperling, founder of the University of Phoenix and chairman of the Apollo Group board, is happy to please the customers. “This is a corporation, not a social entity,” Sperling told one interviewer. “Coming here is not a rite of passage. We are not trying to develop their value systems or go in for that ‘expand their minds’ bullshit.” ■

¡No Quiero Taco Bell!



David Bacon interviews
Lucas Benitez of the
Coalition of Immokalee Workers

While the South is still the most hostile terrain for workers and unions in the United States today, the region increasingly has become a battleground for militant labor struggles. One of the most notable efforts comes from an area where involuntary servitude is still a living reality—the Florida Everglades.

The Coalition of Immokalee Workers is a farmworker organizing project there, based among immigrant Mexican, Central American and Haitian laborers. Utilizing the organizing traditions those workers have brought with them to the United States, the CIW has challenged the local growers as well as the fast-food industry that buys their produce.

The coalition has specifically targeted Taco Bell, arguing that the company has grown wealthy by keeping down the price of tomatoes used on its tacos and nachos. While their wages are not determined directly by Taco Bell, the farmworkers argue that the company is ultimately responsible for the miserable conditions in Florida's fields.

In March, 1,500 protesters—including the farmworkers, other union members and students—marched through the streets of Irvine, California, and brought that message to Taco Bell's imposing blue-glass corporate tower. Following the march, Lucas Benitez, a CIW leader, explained why consumers should think twice about labor strife before they bite into their next chalupa.



Protesters march to Taco Bell headquarters in Irvine, California.

DAVID MCNEW/GETTY



The Coalition of Immokalee Workers is named for a town in Florida?

Immokalee is in southwest Florida, in the middle of the Everglades. It's a town made up of agricultural workers, most of them immigrants—low-paid workers. The bulk of these workers are Mexican, Haitian and Guatemalan. In some ways, it's more a labor reserve than a town, an unincorporated area where the population nearly doubles to 30,000 people during the season when the growers need workers.

Every day here, thousands of people wake up at four in the morning to beg for a day's work in the central parking lot in town. And every Friday, they get checks from three or four different companies. No company has a fixed work force. But the Immokalee area is one of the most important agricultural areas of the United States, growing tomatoes and other vegetables, a great deal of which is used by the fast-food industry. It's one of the most productive agricultural regions because of its ideal climate. Oranges and tomatoes are the two largest cash crops.

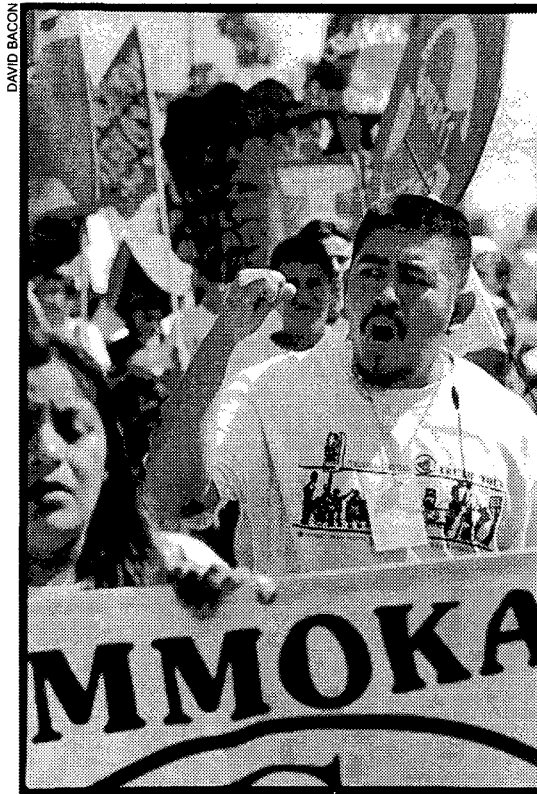
What is life like for Florida farmworkers right now?

Florida is one of the most backward states in relation to organizing agricultural workers. Many people may remember *Harvest of Shame*, [Edward R. Murrow's 1960] documentary that dramatized the horrendous conditions facing workers in the fields. More than 40 years later, all that has changed are the faces.

During the past five years, we have taken before the Department of Justice documentation of three slavery operations existing in our midst. One employer, for instance, held more than 400 people in bondage, forcing them to work 10 to 12 hour days, six days a week, for as little as \$20 a day. They were watched by armed guards in both the fields and camps. After years of investigation, two crew leaders were sentenced in 1997 to 15 years each in federal prison. Another employer is serving three years for having held some 30 other workers in two trailers in a swamp near Immokalee. The third case is still under investigation.

What has the CIW been able to accomplish in terms of actually changing the conditions of Florida farmworkers?

When we started, the piece rates hadn't been raised for over 20 years. Our most significant accomplishment has been helping to get an industry-wide increase from 13 to 25 percent, not just here, but all along the East Coast. We've stopped the non-payment of wages and violence against the workers, and freed hundreds from debt bondage. And the state of Florida has budgeted more than \$15 million for the construction of farmworker housing. And we've done this work in solidarity with other community organizations and unions in Florida. Hopefully, that means we've contributed to creating a stronger



Benitez (left) and the Florida farmworkers are "tired of subsidizing Taco Bell's profits with our poverty."

movement for all workers in the South, not just ourselves.

How has the climate for organizing workers changed in the South?

Despite its well-earned reputation as hostile territory for labor, the South is home to several of the most militant organizing efforts in the country today, including the fight of the Charleston longshoremen and our own campaign here in Immokalee. Creative, community-based and highly politicized organizing campaigns are increasingly common, including Unite for Dignity in Miami, Black Workers for Justice in North Carolina, and the Miami Workers Center. These all display a grassroots militancy growing up in the heart of the South. In some ways, the South's anti-labor atmosphere actually made these new aggressive organizing tactics neces-

sary to shift the balance of power between workers and their employers and win even the most modest changes.

The South has undergone a dramatic shift in population that has transformed its labor force, especially the low-wage work force. In some ways, the South has more in common now with 21st-century Los Angeles than it does with 1960s Montgomery. That doesn't negate the importance of black workers here. It simply means that there is an important new issue in the Southern reality—the rapid and widespread influx of immigrant workers.

The CIW has become well-known for using the organizing traditions workers bring with them from their countries of origin. Have you found that this provides a way of organizing workers who, in the eyes of a lot of the labor movement, are considered almost unorganizable?

We are rooted in the concept that we are worker-led. Each and every one of us is a leader, and we have to have ties, deep roots in the community. We use the method of popular education to tie us to all the different communities that exist in Immokalee. It's a method strongly rooted in Mexico, Guatemala, Central America, South America, the Caribbean. ...

Our theme is that consciousness plus commitment equals change. Though many of the workers cannot read, we use methods that are appropriate, such as movies, popular theater and cartoons and drawings, which enable everyone to reflect upon their lives, upon their situation, and to understand more clearly what is happening around them.

Some of the tactics the CIW uses, like strikes, are similar to other unions. In what ways is the CIW different from a traditional union?

The CIW is a community-based labor organization. We carried out three community-wide general strikes—in 1995, 1997 and 1999. We organized a month-long hunger strike in 1997-1998 by

six CIW members and a two-week-long march across southern Florida. And most recently, we took two buses of farmworkers and supporters on a cross-country caravan, the "Taco Bell Truth Tour." We're not a top-down organization. All these actions really depend on the rank and file, the grassroots. Where we differ from many unions is that we operate from a basis of constant political education of our members. We also take on community issues, like housing or police misconduct, as an integral part of our work.

Who are the growers in southern Florida?

When we talk about the growers here, we're not talking about a family rancher with 200 or 300 acres. We're talking about big business. These are large, multinational corporations that go all the way from southern Florida up the East Coast to Pennsylvania. Gargiulo produces all the way up the coast and in California as well. The company was the main target of the United Farm Workers in its strawberry campaign in Watsonville. Six L's Packing Company is another one. The corporations here have land in Puerto Rico and some produce in Mexico as well.

So why has the CIW targeted Taco Bell?

We think Taco Bell should take responsibility for the conditions under which the tomatoes for their chalupas and their tacos are grown and harvested. This is really no different from the conditions of Nike workers in Asia.

Taco Bell has a lot of leverage. Just a simple phone call to the growers here to say, "You've got to resolve the situation of the workers; you've got to improve their conditions," would change everything overnight. Growers here don't want to lose their multibillion dollar contracts with Taco Bell.

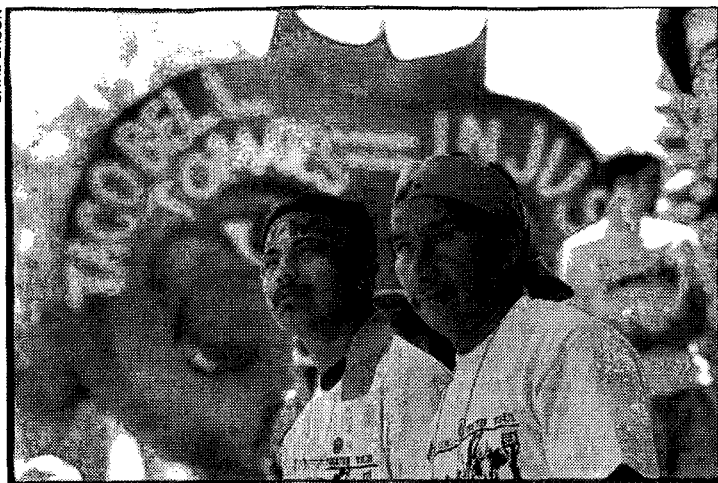
We're asking for just one cent. If Taco Bell paid one additional cent per pound of tomatoes, and that money were funneled directly to the workers, the piece rate for tomatoes we pick would nearly double. Right now we get 40 to 45 cents per 32-pound bucket of tomatoes.

Taco Bell has not only the responsibility to do what is right, it has the power to do it. It is a multinational corporation with \$5.2 billion in annual sales, and is part of Tricon, the world's largest restaurant system, with \$22 billion in annual receipts. Taco Bell's tremendous global revenues are based on cheap ingredients for the food they sell, including cheap tomatoes picked by farmworkers in Florida who are paid sub-poverty wages. We are tired of subsidizing Taco Bell's profits with our poverty.

So what does Taco Bell say?

They tell the media they are not getting involved, because they are not dealing directly with the relations of production in the field. So they don't involve themselves in what they call "labor disputes." But we have to remember that those

DAVID BACON



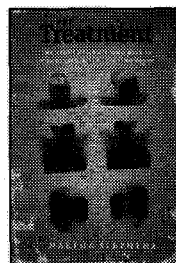
The coalition's theme is "consciousness plus commitment equals change."

were almost the exact same words used by Nike [about sweatshops in Asia].

Maybe Taco Bell is also worried about who works in Taco Bell franchises. They're almost all young people working for minimum wage, and there's not a union in sight. Workers in Washington, Oregon and California have filed class-action suits over unpaid wages.

If customers of Taco Bell understood that if they paid one penny more for a taco or chalupa—more than covering the one cent increase per pound of tomatoes that would double the wages of workers in Florida—wouldn't almost every customer be happy to pay?

We are confirming that through our own work. We've forged an alliance with students, and they're some of the largest consumers of the tacos and chalupas. They understand that one cent could benefit us, and they've helped and supported us. But we have to change the whole mentality of the corporation as well. ■



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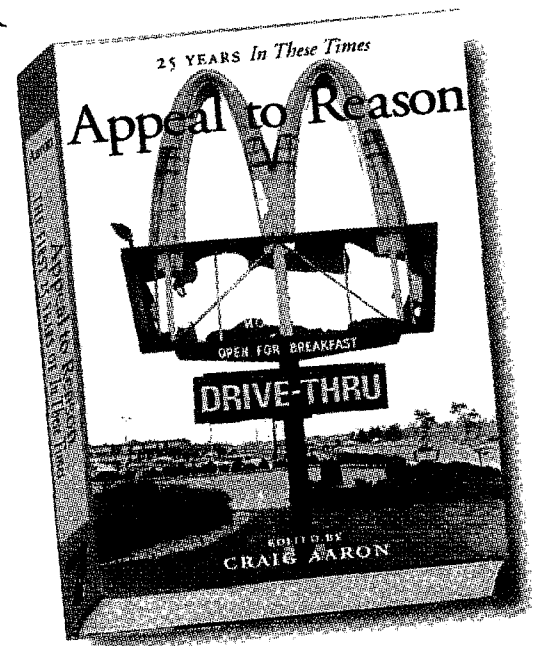
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Human Cameras, Human Shields, Human Targets

Hundreds of "internationals" find themselves inside a war zone in Palestine

By Geov Parrish

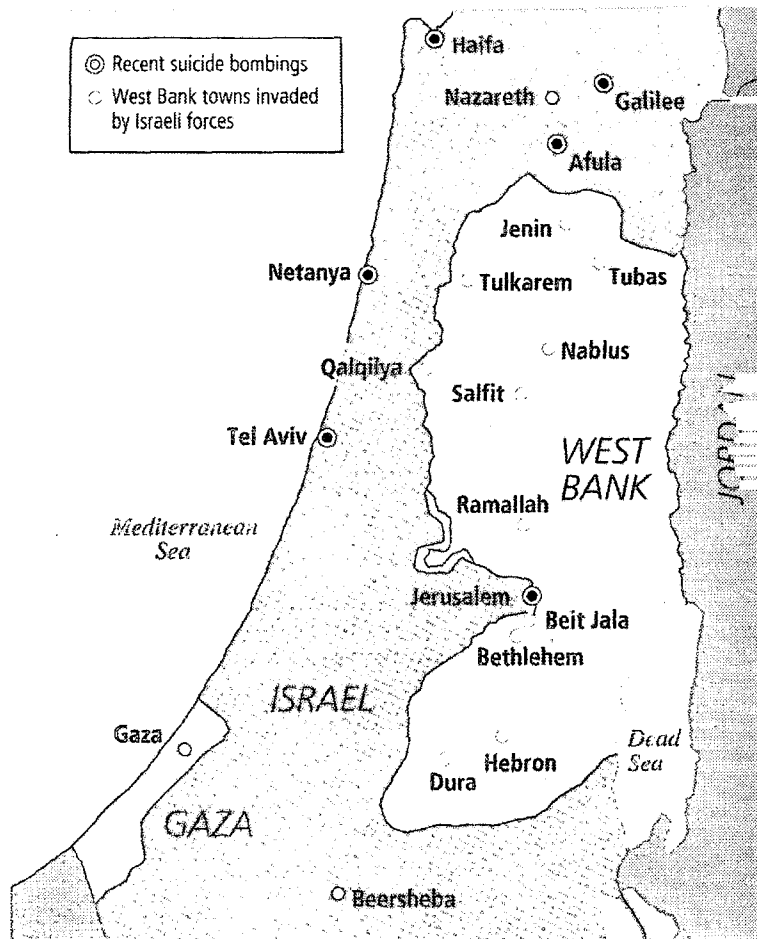
After a long and dreary winter, it is an utterly perfect, sunny spring day. It is April, and I should be out in the garden, or down by the lake, or doing something to soak up the springtime.

Instead, I am on the phone, talking with a New Yorker (and former co-worker) named Kristen Schurr. Outside my window, kids are playing. Outside hers, it is a war zone, and the children are shot at every day. Schurr is living in a Palestinian refugee camp called Al-Azzeh, outside Bethlehem. It has been a bad week.

"The first night I was here, just crossing the alley in front of the apartment, I was shot at," she says matter-of-factly. "They showed me how to duck and run." During our conversations, Schurr practiced the maneuver, pausing during a sentence as she scurried across some alley; there's a sniper tower in the adjacent Israeli settlement, and the Israeli army has also taken over Bethlehem's tallest buildings. At times, I could hear the gunshots and 18 mm shells over the phone.

They were ominous sounds. As Israel's latest, most brutal offensive against Palestinians in the West Bank began, eyewitnesses immediately began telling consistent stories of Israeli tactics no fear of suicide bombings could justify: "disappearings" of thousands of Palestinian men under 45, with some being beaten and released, the rest beaten but not released, others simply shot; arrests of ambulance and medical personnel trying to reach the sick and wounded; corpses lying unattended for days; whole cities running out of food and medicine; the use of the elderly as unwilling human shields; widespread reports of looting and soldiers destroying food and medical aid; a tank crushing an ambulance; an army crushing an entire economy, destroying utilities, roads, all government records, buildings and infrastructure; sniper fire and tanks directed at the Church of the Nativity and unarmed refugees trapped within.

To most of the world, the Bush administration's reaction to this offensive has been appalling: first blaming Yasser Arafat alone for the violence, then criticizing Israel on the basis of political considerations, not humanitarian ones. The offensive became a grim contest for Ariel Sharon, a race to subject as many Palestinians as possible to his crackdown before international fury made it untenable.



But not all Americans were as disengaged as George W. Bush. Schurr, a 33-year-old doctoral student from Manhattan, was in Palestine for 18 days as one of a few hundred delegates for the current tour of the International Solidarity Movement (ISM). It was the third such tour for the ISM, recently organized by the Center for Rapprochement, a Palestinian NGO based in Bethlehem. Along with other "internationals" from Europe, Asia and North America, the ISM activists came intending to be foreign, nonviolent witnesses to Israel's occupation—human cameras doing the work U.S. media mostly won't, who could show their solidarity with the Palestinians through their presence, through protests, through house rebuildings and olive tree plantings, and then return home to tell their stories.

Schurr's delegation knew it was walking into a tense situation. And then, shortly after their arrival, a Palestinian suicide bomber killed 22 Israelis at Passover—and things got a lot worse. War erupted in front of them, a one-sided war on the streets of cities already under military occupation for 35 years.

President Bush's initial reaction to the offensive was to acknowledge Israel's need to defend itself against suicide bombs, and U.S. media overflowed with portraits of Israelis afraid to go out for pizza. But Schurr does not spend much time worrying about Israel's plight. "Palestinians are forced to live in unimaginable conditions," Schurr says. "Just to cross the street, they have to duck and run, that's life here. There are no schools here, people aren't able to work, we have two or three days' worth of food left inside the camp. Israel has been continually attacking Palestinians and putting them in a humiliating position where they're supposed to beg for the most basic human rights."

ISM delegates try to accompany ambulances, which soldiers routinely detain. Others walk with Palestinians released from jail or trapped inside or away from their homes, so that they won't be

shot on the way if *manatajawol*, or curfew, were suddenly declared. That is one of the first Arabic words the internationals learn. "This camp is made of stone buildings with narrow alleyways," Schurr says. "There's no room to build out, so they build up, generations of families living on top of one another. The Israeli military comes in sometimes and rounds up men and disappears them. Sometimes some of them come home, sometimes not."

Schurr was also present in Ramallah when Israel Defense Force (IDF) soldiers, in their American-made tanks, attacked a group of activists as it tried to deliver food and medical aid. The soldiers fired into the ground in front of the crowd, and the bullets ricocheted into them; Schurr is convinced that had the front row been Palestinians, rather than foreigners, the soldiers wouldn't have aimed at the ground.

Jackie Wolf agrees. A 52-year-old from Lopez Island, Washington, and a witness in the first *intifada*, Wolf was among the nonviolent activists shot at by the IDF in a separate incident at Beit Jala, with eight seriously wounded. She was grazed by a bullet fragment and only slightly injured. "They used bullets that are called dum dum bullets, and when they hit, whatever they hit, there are fragments everywhere," she says. "They shot at the cameramen. That's their main tactic—to shoot at the journalists. They shot at the wall next to the cameraman. He got hit with several pretty big fragments. He moved back toward us, a few other people, and I went to him to see if he was OK, so they fired at us, I got hit with some fragments ... and then the tanks pushed us back down the road. That was our one attempt at a march."

Of her own wound, Wolf says it "hurt like hell." But she's staying put for now. "There's no doubt that the presence of internationals here has made a huge difference," she says. "It means so much to the people here to have some of us willing to go through this with them, especially people from America, because America is responsible for so much of this. It's paying for the whole thing. If they have one word for the people in the United States, it's 'stop.'"

Some internationals have left—not expecting to be dropped into a war zone, not prepared for the terror of it. Some have been expelled, including a large delegation led by Frenchman José Bové. Others are still trying to get into the West Bank, with mixed success.

But most have stayed put. When I talked with Bay Area college teacher Rich Wood, the ISM delegation was mostly cooling its heels due to curfews, and he was frustrated. "There's really

very little we can do here," Wood says. "That's the problem. People here are scared to go outside the door. The last few days, we haven't been able to do anything."

He was also here the last time around. "It's extremely different from the last *intifada*. This is armed. Last time it was mass actions. Now, there are hundreds of armed [Palestinian] fighters in every city, it's a very different feeling."

As reinforcements join the internationals, their stated purpose, while there, is to bear witness, to act as human shields, and to tell the world what is happening on the ground, away from the ministerial briefings and White House declarations. "I'm documenting this trip so much," Schurr says. "Any time I don't have my recorder going or my camera, there's something I miss. But sometimes, if I whip something out of my pocket, [I'm afraid] I'll get shot by an Israeli soldier."

Despite the danger, the internationals say their presence helps increase the chances for survival of a largely secular civilian population that only wants the violence, and the occupation, to end. "I've been befriended by all the little girls in the camp," Schurr says. "They call my name and get me to run around with them. It's kind of amazing that life goes on in this way."

"There's so much despair but there's also this laughter that's as prevalent as the despair is. And [there's] this incredible brightness in their eyes. They look at each other when the shelling is over, and the eye contact here is amazing, and people start laughing. It's like, what else are you gonna do?"

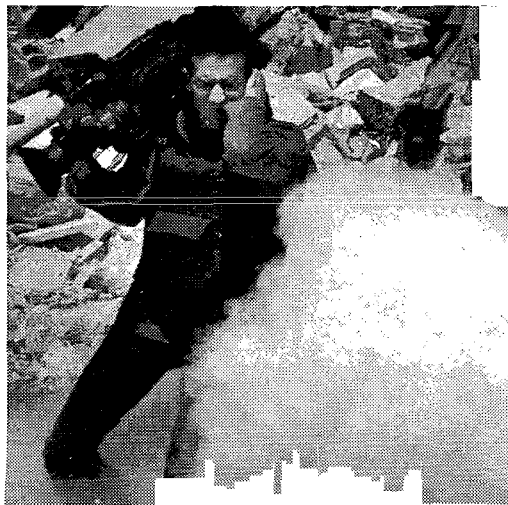
"It's getting harder to be clear about it the longer I'm here. When I was in [the United States] this was a really political situation, but being here now it's become very personal. I have a family here now, I have friends here now, I'm called a daughter, a sister."

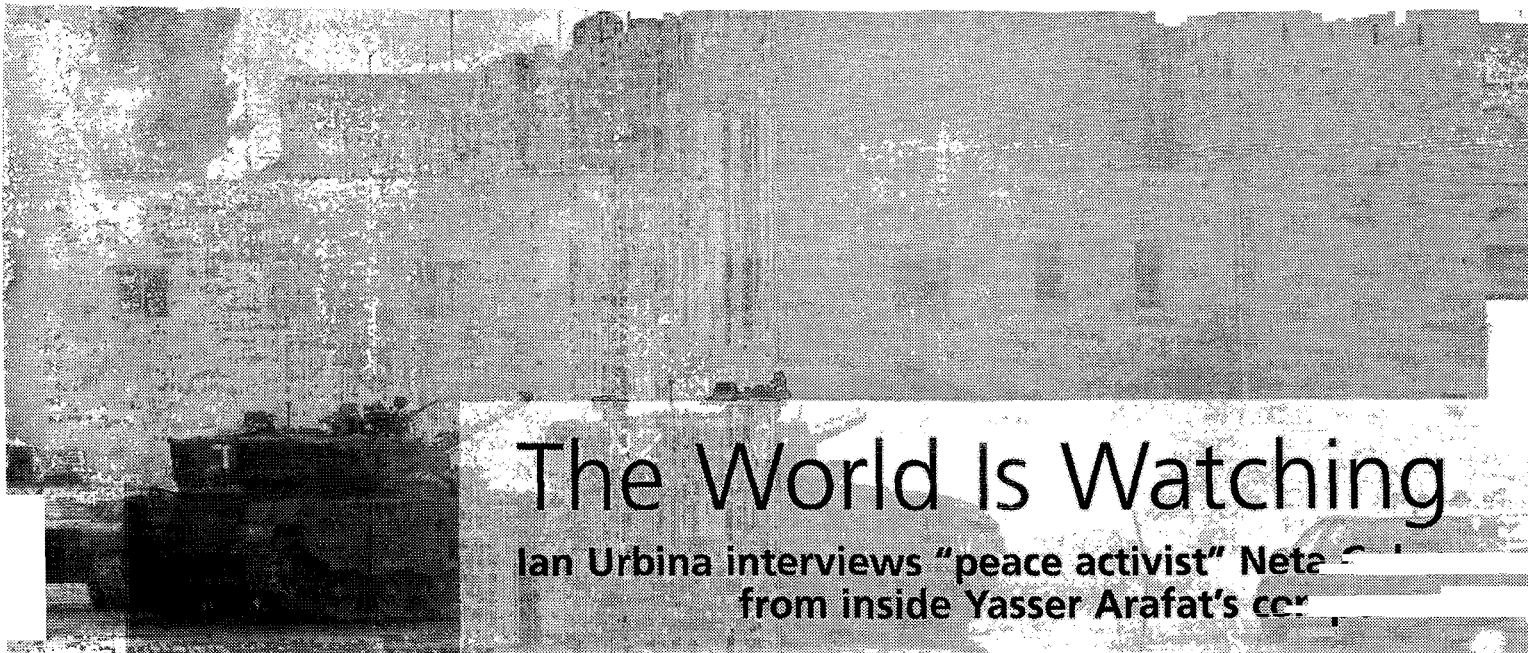
As she says this, I am wondering whether Schurr's "not being clear" any longer, and now taking this "cut and dry" issue personally, has led her to greater insight, or whether it is a symptom of how easy it is to get sucked into the rage that provides seemingly endless fuel for all sides in this conflict.

Near the end of a long conversation, I ask her what she will do when she returns to the United States. She starts into a well-practiced recital of the work that is needed to end U.S. support of the Israeli occupation, but stops: "I could have answered that question before I left, but now that I'm here ... I don't know. I don't know that I want to come back."

And, softly, on the phone from Bethlehem: "The stars are out tonight." ■

"If they
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The World Is Watching

Ian Urbina interviews "peace activist" Neta Golani
from inside Yasser Arafat's compound

SCOTT NELSON / GETTY

On March 29, Israel Defense Forces surrounded the compound of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. In hopes of forestalling an attack, 40 international peace observers took up residence in the besieged building. Among them is Neta Golani, an Israeli-Canadian activist with the International Solidarity Movement. She gave this interview to *In These Times* by phone from the compound on April 8.

Can you describe the scene there?

Things are pretty bad. The Israeli army has let in food but no medicine. We have a lot of people with diabetes and hypertension. There is also no water, so sanitary conditions are deteriorating. But really, the thing that's hitting the Palestinians in here the worst is the unknown. All of them have family in Jenin and Nablus where huge massacres are taking place. No one knows if their children and parents are alive. My husband is in Jenin, and he may be dead.

Who is in the compound with you?

There are 450 people total in the building. Roughly 40 of them are internationals. In a lot of ways, it's more diverse in here than outside. There are French, Italian, Canadian and German. Many are with the anti-globalization movement. We take shifts and try to keep spread out and moving at all times. The last time the soldiers came to deliver food, they were sure to take as many photos as possible of the inside. Obviously, they want to know where people are for the purposes of storming the place. Some internationals are near President Arafat around the clock.

Do you think your presence is making a difference?

Sure, our presence helps. For Sharon, foreign blood costs more than Arab blood, but we definitely aren't a 100 percent deterrent. Even after we occupied the building, [Israeli Gen. Shaul] Mofaz was caught on a camera he didn't know was rolling, telling Sharon that they had to get rid of Arafat right away. We watched it here on CNN.

Are they going to storm the compound?

It's hard to say. It would be pretty stupid, but just two days ago they started firing machine guns at the building. This isn't all that unusual, and everyone knows to stay away from windows and thin walls. But then the tank fired and hit the building. That really surprised us. I think the Israelis were testing the waters to see how the international community and press would react.

Were there casualties?

Yes. Two internationals were hurt and four Palestinians got it pretty bad, one lost his eye and was in critical condition.

Where is he now?

Well, he was taken out of the compound by medics, but apparently Israeli soldiers stopped the ambulance and removed him. No one has heard anything since, so we're not sure if he's gone.

What needs to happen before the internationals will leave the building?

The Israeli troops need to get all the way out of Ramallah.

Do you think Colin Powell's trip will help matters?

Yes and no. Assuming he comes to the compound, which he hasn't yet committed to, he will probably get the Israeli troops to move back a little. But the problem is the occupation. Until he gets the troops to pull all the way back to the U.N.-recognized 1967 borders, nothing will really change here.

Is the international community helping?

Again, yes and no. The United Nations keeps getting measures vetoed by the United States. Some aid organizations are doing really important work on the ground. But to slow the bloodshed, we desperately need more international peace shields to come to the Occupied Territories. There also need to be efforts abroad like what was done to bring down apartheid. Rhetoric from foreign governments and citizens isn't going to change anything. There will have to be sanctions and popular boycott efforts.

When it comes to advocating solutions, is there political debate among those on the inside?

I can't speak for Arafat's inner circle. I'm sure there is discussion all the time there. With the internationals, there are some differing views on tactics but not much else. Basically, everyone here thinks that the occupation is wrong and Israel needs to pull back to the 1967 borders for there to be real peace. Most in here are not hard-core ideologues, it's just that circumstances got so bad that we thought it was time to do something. ■

Ian Urbina is associate editor of *Middle East Report*.

Scenes from the Occupation

By Charmaine Seitz

RAMALLAH, THE WEST BANK

It has been four days since anyone from her office has been able to talk to Alia Shaar. At dawn on April 6, this mother, her 5-year-old son and her husband were crammed with some 200 other people into four apartments in their 30-flat building.

"Ten Israeli soldiers came to our building and asked us to leave," she said in a phone interview that day. "We went out into the street and waited there until 5:30 in the morning." Israeli helicopters and tanks bombarded the city around them. The Israeli soldiers in Shaar's building blew in its front door, damaging her first-floor apartment. Then the building's residents were herded back inside to spend hours and then days rationing food, cell phone batteries and news of the ongoing Israeli attack. Meanwhile, the soldiers used the remaining apartments as a central command. "We have food," she said back then. "But we don't know how long it will last."

As the Israeli army nears its third week of reoccupation of West Bank cities, news of the treatment of Palestinian civilians has caused outrage here and abroad. In Nablus, where Shaar lives, journalists have been banned from covering ongoing events. In Jenin, where ambulances have not been allowed to pick up dozens of corpses left lying in the streets, journalists have had to garner stories from the 300 Palestinians released into a nearby town after being arrested, many of them stripped to their underwear.

Ramallah's 60,000 residents have been holed up at home for nearly two weeks. Here the occupation has begun to settle in. Fighting occurs only sporadically in the eerily quiet city, but sudden death looms. A nurse at the Ramallah Hospital reports that three bodies were brought into the morgue, swollen and stinking from days in the sun. One of the corpses, a man in his fifties, was wearing a Palestinian security uniform. He had been shot in the neck.

And then there are the panicked phone calls from neighbor to neighbor. "A woman was shot by a sniper just a few minutes ago as she was hanging up her children's clothes outside her house. I know her mother. She was so young."

The hospital confirms that a 27-year-old woman was killed by a single gunshot wound to the chest. Ambulances, which coordinate with Israeli authorities to assure their own safe passage, were not allowed to tend to her for 45 minutes. "It is really hard moving around the city," says Red Crescent's Dr. Ziad Abu Asia. "I was talking to one of the ambulance guys, and just today he was stopped and searched for two hours."

Outside a house in the Ein Misbah neighborhood, a Merkava tank rumbles to the curb and trains its cannon at the houses in the valley. Eight soldiers get out of an armored personnel carrier and move in formation out of sight. Minutes later, the soldiers return, empty-handed. They are still looking for armed men—police and militia—that roam the valleys. Some 1,000 people have been arrested here, several hundred released after interrogation, and the others detained in Israeli prisons still standing from the first *intifada*. Israeli lawyers are having trouble tracking the men down.

Samar Huwara, who fled her home in the first days of the invasion, returned in a curfew break only to find that the house had been looted by soldiers who had made themselves at home. "The place was a mess," she says. "My DVD player was gone and most of my CDs. The ones for my son, *Snow White* and Disney, were left on the floor. The video camera, even the water filter was missing."

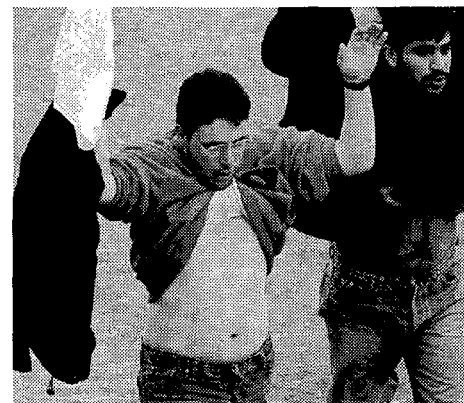
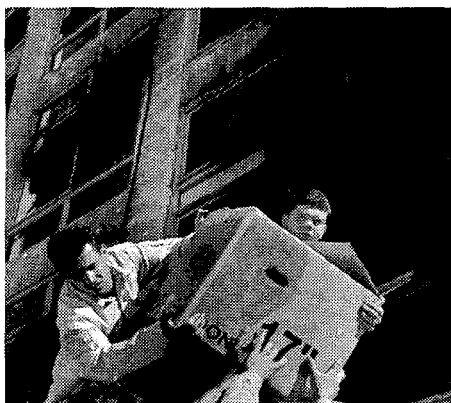
Huwara, not one to let the looting pass, approached the soldiers outside and asked for their captain. When she told him what was missing, he looked shocked. "I don't know if he was pretending, but he said that when I come back all the things would be returned."

Three days later, at the next lifting of the curfew, Huwara went back to her now abandoned house. "I don't know who did it, but the things that had been thrown on the floor were put back neatly in the cabinet and someone had put all the soldier's garbage in a trash bag." Her expensive electronic equipment was still nowhere to be found.

On April 2, 30 tanks rumbled up to the Palestinian Ministry of Education. On the second floor, offices have been turned inside out, files dumped on the floor. In the basement finance department, Israeli soldiers detonated a safe. The money and documents that had been inside are missing, say the staff. Also damaged was the computer holding the records of 50 years of Palestinian graduates. "They came to destroy," says Deputy Minister Naim Abu Hummous, found surveying the damage in the three-hour period that residents were allowed out of their homes. "We did not expect that."

Most curious are the 11 computers that were methodically stripped of their casings and plucked of their hard drives. "I am very angry," Abu Hummous says. "I am very upset about this way of dealing with a civilian institution. This way will not bring them peace." ■

"They came to destroy. We did not expect that. This way will not bring them peace."



PHOTOS: CHRIS HONDROS / GETTY



SCOTT NELSON / GETTY



DAVID SILVERMAN / GETTY

War for War's Sake

By Nir Eisikovits

For the past year and a half, Israel has been fighting an aimless war with the Palestinians. In spite of our overwhelming military strength, we cannot beat their national aspirations out of them. In spite of their growing suicidal determination, they cannot force their terms of independence on us. There was, and there still is, no military solution to this conflict.

The outline of the political resolution is crystal clear to everyone involved. The majority of the settlements will have to be dismantled; Israel will have to return to some version of its 1967 borders; Jerusalem will have to be divided; the Palestinians will be granted no practical right of return. And yet we fight. Like blind, psychotic gladiators, we continue to circle each other, getting our bearings only from cries of pain and the taste of blood in our mouths.

And it is not only our lives we are losing. Wars of attrition exact their most unbearable costs on the living. Militarily, intellectually and morally, we are eroding.

Militarily, the IDF has practically relinquished its training schedule. One of the world's most efficient and celebrated armies is becoming fat and sluggish by the day. And the results are beginning to show. To give just one recent example, a lone Palestinian sniper equipped with an ancient rifle killed seven soldiers in early March and proceeded to get away unharmed. This is a state of affairs we cannot afford. We live in a pretty volatile neighborhood. Iran is developing nuclear capabilities; Iraq is stockpiling weapons of mass destruction; Libya and Yemen are openly and unequivocally calling for Israel's destruction. We need an army, not a trigger-happy riot police.

Intellectually, we seem to have thrown our capacity for critical thinking into the wind. We are so busy digging into our fox-holes, trying to block out the carnage around us, that we buy almost anything we are told. Consider the *Karine A* episode. For months, government and military officials have been claiming that the seizure of this shipload of heavy weaponry intended for

the Palestinian Authority proves that the PA is a breeding ground for terrorists. Incredibly, no one has ever suggested the obvious counter-argument: We are at war. We have been bombing them with everything we have: F-16s, Apache attack helicopters, Merkava tanks. Wars are a two-sided affair. If you bomb someone, you get bombed back. If you use heavy weapons against someone, they are bound to do their best to use them as well. It has nothing to do with terrorism. You would expect the citizens of a country that has been fighting wars for more than 50 years to catch on to this.

Morally, we are going blind. A few weeks ago, a suicide attack occurred in Jerusalem while a soccer match was being broadcast on television. The program editors decided to split the screen in two, exhibiting the neat green turf side by side with the chaotic red human imbroglio. Some time later, the IDF invaded several refugee camps in Gaza and the West Bank, looking for militants and munitions plants. The forces advanced from house to house by means of cutting holes in the adjacent walls rather than through the streets, which were deemed too dangerous. At around the same time, a member of parliament scolded soldiers for crying at the funerals of their dead comrades, claiming that the practice was demoralizing. What exactly have we become, if we can no longer separate soccer from dead bodies, walls from doorways? What kind of person doesn't cry at funerals?

"No one chooses to wage war or foment war for the sake of war," wrote Aristotle. An aimless conflict cannot make sense. Anyone engaging in one becomes weak, stupid, opaque. It's time to declare victory, or defeat, or anything. We can't take much more of this.

Nir Eisikovits is a captain in the Israeli reserves and an attorney who is getting a Ph.D. in philosophy at Boston University. A version of this article originally appeared in the Boston Herald on March 31.

Little Big Woman

By Eugene McCarraher

Looking at Chicago a century ago, Jacob Riis saw one clear beacon of decency and hope in the midst of graft, misery and unprecedented promise. "They have good sense in Chicago," he wrote. "They have Jane Addams there."

Living in the 19th Ward among mostly Italian immigrants, Addams, along with

Jane Addams and the Dream of American Democracy

By Jean Bethke Elshtain
Basic Books

328 pages, \$28

The Jane Addams Reader

Edited by Jean Bethke Elshtain
Basic Books

488 pages, \$20

her colleagues at Hull House, posed a small but vital contrast to the city's exuberant callousness. While Americans could have gathered from Lincoln Steffens, Theodore Dreiser or Upton Sinclair that Chicago was a metropolis dedicated to the unbridled pursuit of money and power, Addams possessed the unlikely strength that came from devotion to the helpless, the fearful, the voiceless and the broken.

In her generous, hopeful, but ultimately disappointing biography of Addams—as well as in a complementary collection of Addams' essays, speeches and editorials—Jean Bethke Elshtain, the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Professor at the University of Chicago, celebrates that "good sense" and aims to recover it for our own time. Confronting what she considers the misunderstanding and condescension of posterity, Elshtain upholds Addams as a model of moral and spiritual integrity, an icon of a "social feminism" and an original theorist of social democracy.

Popular memory and scholarly history have been only spottily attentive to

Addams. If she's recognized at all by non-academics, she's known as the author of *Twenty Years at Hull-House* (1910), while Hull House itself is remembered as a kind of soup kitchen. Addams has fared only a bit better among scholars, and even that's debatable.

Some classify her as an earnest but prescientific precursor of more professionalized approaches to poverty and "social services." Others consider her a skillful Progressive popularizer and downgrade her intellectual contributions to American social thought. She can appear as a reckless compulsive, turning the poor into a career, or as a bourgeois Lady Bountiful, projecting

While repairing Addams' reputation among academics, Elshtain also contends that she articulated "a powerful cultural and political critique that is, at one and the same time, a constructive vision of American democracy." Anointing Addams an indispensable Progressive intellectual, Elshtain joins a resurgent, post-New Left interest in the American Progressive tradition among scholars and social critics; enters a protracted and sometimes bitter debate among feminists over the very nature of feminism itself; and reflects the "communitarian" strain in social thought with which she is widely associated.

To Elshtain, Addams' most attractive quality was her attention to the mundane, her discernment of grandeur in the daily tasks of labor and love. From her childhood to her embattled later years, Addams was embarked on what Elshtain calls "a pilgrim's progress" of care for the local and unglorious roots of life. These, Elshtain believes, are the well-springs of democratic promise, and a regeneration of our desiccated public life must partake of Addams' fondness for the quotidian. "You cannot be universal anywhere but in your own backyard," as Elshtain sums it up.

Addams' first backyard was in Cedarville, Illinois, where she was born into a prosperous middle-class family in 1860. In *Twenty Years*, Addams traced her pilgrimage to adoration of her successful and politically active father, who embodied the connection between the home and the wider world that would become Jane's abiding concern. (Her mother died when Jane was 3.) John Huy Addams revered Abraham Lincoln, invited political figures into their home, left the front door

unlocked and made the family parlor into a busy lending library. Both Jane Addams' life and Hull House's "philosophy of the open door" comprised a "sincere tribute of imitation" of her beloved father.

Literature and religion were also companions on Addams' youthful pilgrimage. "Jennie" Addams was a remarkably well-read girl, devouring everything from



Jane Addams, losing herself to find herself.

her inner turmoil and defusing working-class militance. At the end of her deft (if long) critique of previous scholarship, Elshtain promises to build on Christopher Lasch's portrait in *The New Radicalism in America* (1965), which both exemplified "sympathetic understanding" and suggested Addams' stature as a thinker.

SWARTHMORE COLLEGE PEACE COLLECTION

Homer, Shakespeare and Milton to Hawthorne, Dickens and Eliot, whose conclusion to *Middlemarch*—"the growing good of the world is partly dependent on unhistoric acts"—encapsulates for Elshtain Addams' subsequent career. Her exceptional education in the public school and in Rockford Female Seminary

**Addams met head-on
the conservative
canard that activists
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problems.**

("the Mount Holyoke of the West") also nurtured the lucid, graceful and vivid prose that made Addams "a writer's writer," as Elshtain justifiably comments.

Young Jane's "excessive sense of responsibility," as she later called it, was also shaped by deep if rather vague religious convictions. Elshtain acknowledges the moral power liberal Protestantism possessed among middle-class youth who, like Addams, desired to follow in Jesus' footsteps even as they doubted his divinity. Confessing to her lifelong friend Ellen Gates Starr that she needed religion "only in a practical sense," Addams—like acolytes of the Social Gospel Protestantism of her day—"professed more interest in Jesus as a moral hero," Elshtain explains, "than in Jesus the Son of God." Addams' religiosity, she comments elsewhere, was "like a pair of sensible shoes for walking about and doing good works."

Young Jane heralded her future in "Bread Givers," a brief but prescient oration to the junior class of Rockford. Full of what's often dismissed with a knowing smile as adolescent ardor, this speech, delivered on behalf of "young women of the 19th century," could be read as a manifesta of sorts for educated young women of her time. "Woman's Noblest Mission," Addams declared, was a life given over to "good works and honest toil." While embracing the new possibilities open to women, Addams urged her classmates to hold on to "the old ideal of womanhood" that enjoined her to "give bread unto her household."

After graduating from Rockford, Addams traveled about Europe in search

of a vehicle for "bread-giving." After two grand tours of cities and villages, Addams discovered the "settlement house" movement emerging in England. The settlement movement was more than traditional poor relief. Toynbee Hall, a settlement established in London's Whitechapel district by Oxford tutors and students inspired by John Ruskin and T.H. Green, provided a library, pool, gymnasium and meeting halls, a "people's university" for the privileged and the poor.

Galvanized by Toynbee, Addams returned to America, purchased a large house in Chicago along with several friends, and wrote an imperishable 1892 essay, "The Subjective Necessity for Social Settlements," in which she argued that the settlement movement offered a resolution to the vocational crisis of young men and women. Indeed, Addams met head-on the nasty and tiresome conservative canard that activists are just working out their personal problems. That's exactly what they're doing, Addams agreed unabashedly, when they seek "an outlet for that sentiment of universal brotherhood." Lose yourself to find yourself, as a Galilean activist once put it.

Rather than give an exhaustive account of Hull House—something Addams had already done in *Twenty Years*—Elshtain uses the settlement as the springboard for a discussion of Addams' social and political thought. Like Toynbee Hall, Hull House sponsored theater, music, reading, handicrafts, kindergartens, nurseries and discussion groups. But the larger significance of the settlement resides for Elshtain in its "dream of American democracy" as "a truly useful Christianity" fulfilled in art, learning and social equality. Never a socialist but something other than a liberal, Addams (like Herbert Croly, Walter Lippmann and other "progressives" then and now) obscured the line between socialism and liberal democracy with "socialized democracy," a kind of Hull House writ large.

By providing libraries, galleries, schools, parks and other public places, as well as by ensuring decent, dignified workplaces, democracy could be "a process," Elshtain explains, "that breaks down artificial barriers between people" and enables them to realize their social potential. Democracy could avert class and ethnic warfare by allowing us to meet, not as natives and

aliens, exploiters and exploited, or bureaucrats and clients, but as "neighbors and fellow citizens who have had vastly different experiences." Addams' support in 1912 for the Progressive Theodore Roosevelt rather than the Socialist Eugene Debs suggests that her ideal was a public service capitalism.

Noting that this new democracy was a project in "civic housekeeping," Elshtain emphasizes the pivotal role of gender in Addams' political philosophy. Addams insisted that participation in democratic life required attention to basic material and social needs often considered the province of women: clean living quarters, medical care, education. At the same time, Addams' frequent reliance on female and especially maternal imagery in discussions of "the body politic" mark for Elshtain a potent perception that the female body is an essential metaphor of "social generativity and fecundity."

Addams' gendered political thought indicated that a "new woman" was central to "socialized democracy." Here Elshtain enters an imbroglio whose combatants range from Katha Pollitt to Christina Hoff Sommers: What is feminism? Elshtain discovers in Addams a "social feminism" that combined the new and the old ideals of womanhood—the "bread-giving" mission glimpsed in Rockford Seminary. Addams held that women must respect both the "social claim"—the realm of wage work and civic life—and the "family claim," the realm of spouse, children, relatives and domestic labor. A traditionalism that scorns the first claim should be rightly dismissed as confining, she thought, while a feminism that abandons the second one was just another form of bourgeois individualism.

Her misgivings about certain kinds of feminism became especially apparent on sexual issues. With Victoria Woodhull or Emma Goldman undoubtedly in mind, Addams welcomed the demise of Victorian prudery without joining the "cult of frankness"—i.e., sexual freedom—in which, as Elshtain puts it, "duty was derided and replaced by a will to power." The cult's "publicists" are not inclined, Elshtain warns, "to interpret critically the dominant themes and demands of their culture, because these come wrapped in the gaily decorated packages of freedom."

Yet Elshtain never hints that Addams' fears were shared by other feminists, such

as Charlotte Perkins Gilman and Vida Dutton Scudder, who were arguably progenitors of a "socialist-feminist" position best exemplified today by Barbara Ehrenreich. Thus, many will hear the Church Lady in Addams' and Elshtain's aversion to liberationist rhetoric. But others may at least welcome their sobering reminder of how "liberation" has been absorbed by consumer culture—the McBealization of feminism.

Addams' bread-giving feminism also figured in the pacifism that damaged her reputation during and after World War I. As the first president of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Addams was one of a fine handful who opposed American entry into the war. For Addams, "woman's remembering heart"—a treasury of memories and affections surrounding love, birth, child-rearing and domestic chores—was also an arsenal in the struggle against militarism. For women, she wrote in *The Long Road of Woman's Memory* (1916), war was "the implacable enemy of their age-long undertaking."

An outspoken supporter of the "war on terrorism," Elshtain becomes notably vacillating about Addams' pacifism, though not about its maternalist casting. She chides Addams for the "naivete of her prewar vision" that modeled international affairs after ethnic relations in Chicago—a criticism that comes fairly late and unexpectedly after a volume of celebratory empathy. But she also realizes that Addams' work with the WILPF was not "an ineffectual or even dangerous sentimentalism," but rather an effort to "forge alternatives to war." Elshtain includes in the reader several of Addams' wartime pieces, especially a fateful 1915 Carnegie Hall speech that cost her dearly in sympathy and support.

The public opprobrium abated, however, and Addams recovered enough of her prewar standing to be widely revered as a kind of secular saint. She directed postwar food relief efforts in Europe and promoted arbitration and negotiation of disputes through her work with the

WILPF, for which she received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931. But Addams' star waned in the progressive firmament because of lingering suspicion, the postwar conservative ascendancy and her own worsening health. When she died in 1935, she received eulogies from around the world, and her funeral on the Hull



Addams (at right) on parade in 1912.

House terrace was attended by thousands. "Such a small woman," Elshtain concludes. "Such a tremendous force."

Elshtain's two volumes both help and hinder a recovery of that force. The reader is a superlative introduction to the range of Addams' concerns, well-selected and succinctly examined. The biography, however, merits a more ambivalent response. Elshtain often writes with elegance and concreteness, and she studs the book with numerous illuminating vignettes from Addams' work. (The story of the overworked mother whose breast milk had mingled with scrubwater is especially powerful.)

But much of the book has the thinness of haste about it, and Elshtain also displays a penchant for the homiletic that will only further burnish her reputation, in some circles, as a female William Bennett. And Elshtain's observation that the young Addams admired Eliot so much that "it is nearly impossible to prize the two apart" applies equally to Elshtain and Addams. Clearly enamored of her subject, Elshtain seldom exhibits the kind of detachment that compels some hard but not necessarily disabling questions.

We should challenge, for instance, Addams'—and Elshtain's—determination to sidestep the issue of class. Conceding

rather lamely that class is an "empirical reality that separates people," both women still hoped to bring "the capitalist and the workingman" together to "meet as individuals beneath a friendly roof." The erasure of organized power from that vision—antagonists meet as *individuals*, not as unions and corporations—allows

Elshtain, a social critic whose disdain for the therapeutic ethos is well-known, to wax touchy-feely when labor and capital are at odds.

If push would ever come to shove—and given their concern with "neighborliness," it's doubtful that Elshtain, Alan Wolfe and other "communitarians" would ever let things get to push—a chat in the parlor is all Elshtain would apparently advise. The communitarian reluctance to discuss power both opens Elshtain to caricature and precludes

an analysis of how capitalism corrupts public life—the "social claim" that Addams enjoined on women and men.

That would be unfortunate, because I think we can draw upon Addams' work, and upon "communitarianism," to renew the moral imagination of the left. As truthful and passionate as it is, a lot of declamation against "compassionate conservatism" has become a way of evading the banality and impoverishment of transformative vision among progressives. The left has relied far too long on the state as the center of its own "bread-giving" vocation. But the latest imperial venture should remind us, as a previous one reminded Randolph Bourne, that war—not generosity—is the health of the state. If we can recover the spirit of "social feminism," and reclaim some of the decentralist vistas of Addams' time—anarchism, syndicalism, guild socialism, to name a few—we might find that "bread-giving," far from being a saccharine bromide, is in fact the clearest realism. ■

Eugene McCarraher teaches humanities at Villanova University. He is the author of *Christian Critics: Religion and the Impasse in Modern American Social Thought* (Cornell). This spring, he is a visiting lecturer at Princeton.

The Good Life

By Kim Phillips-Fein

When Robert Skidelsky began his three-volume biography of John Maynard Keynes in the late '70s, it must have seemed a nearly superhuman project, for Keynes was at that time closer to a god than a mortal. Credited with ending the Depression and saving

John Maynard Keynes: Fighting for Freedom, 1937-1946

By Robert Skidelsky
Viking
580 pages, \$34.95

Europe from revolution, Keynes' theories were the Bible of the postwar boom.

But now that the last volume, *Fighting for Freedom: 1937-1946*, is finally done, Keynes' bust has been toppled as surely as Lenin's. In politics, the New Democrats have proclaimed the era of big government over, doling out tax incentives instead of raising wages. In economics, micro has replaced macro; where Keynes saw the economy in terms of majestic flows of investment and consumption, microeconomists insist that the individual actor, driven by calculated desire, is the sole social force. The onset of Keynes' obsolescence might seem to make a new biography less timely. But it seems appropriate, in his case, for the biography to be completed only after the intellectual universe that he helped to create has largely passed away.

Keynes' life story—as Skidelsky's biography makes clear—was that of a man balanced between two worlds. Though he has the reputation of rescuing capitalism from itself, he did so to protect the fragile edifice of high culture from the grimy proles. His economic heterodoxy stemmed from his allegiance to a moral aristocracy. He could save capitalism because he had a certain disdain for the world of business.

Yet the independence that freed Keynes to reconceptualize capitalism also prevented him from fully realizing the political implications of his ideas. "I am sure that the power of vested interests is vastly exaggerated compared with the gradual encroachment of ideas," he wrote. From the upper echelons of his esoteric community, he disdained working-class politics; he thought any resistance to his theories was simply a question of the other fellow's stupidity.

The political aloofness that liberated Keynes intellectually made it hard for him to be fully aware of the political context that was needed to transform his theories into policies. During the Keynesian postwar boom, unemployment fell to nearly 1 percent in Britain, and economic inequality actually decreased for the only time in

Even though Keynes adopted the stance of the brash iconoclast, and his followers tried to squash his ideas into technocratic liberalism, there was a politics to the Keynesian program. In the last volume of this magisterial biography, Skidelsky, himself a British economist, falls into the same trap that Keynes did: He glosses over the political conditions that made it possible for Keynes' liberal economic ideas to come to power in the first place.

When John Maynard Keynes was 5 years old, his great-grandmother wrote to him, "You will be expected to be very clever, having lived always in Cambridge." Maynard did not disappoint. His father, John Neville Keynes, was a don of moral philosophy who suffered from regular bouts of nervous depression, accumulated endless hobbies to make up for his difficulties doing sustained work, and took an intense pleasure in his eldest son's precocity. Maynard went to Eton and

Cambridge, achieved top marks in everything, and joined the Apostles, a secret intellectual society for the "pursuit of truth with absolute devotion ... by a group of intimate friends" (to quote one of its members).

While some might have chafed under such parental adoration, or come to find the gothic spires of the university oppressive, Keynes—unlike his father—never felt himself to be essentially at odds with his surroundings. Despair and alienation would be strangers to him throughout his life. On his deathbed, asked what his greatest regret might be, Keynes is supposed to have replied, "I should have drunk more champagne."

It was at Cambridge that Keynes discovered the neo-Platonic philosophy of G.E. Moore, one of his major intellectual influences. The young Moorite circle that gathered at *fin-de-siècle* Cambridge believed that "nothing mattered except states of mind ... chiefly our own," as Keynes would write later in life.



John Maynard Keynes with his wife, Russian ballerina Lydia Lopokova, from a 1932 portrait by William Roberts.

the 20th century. This was possible, however, only because of the political birth of labor, in both the United States and Britain, during the Depression and the struggle against fascism in World War II.

intellectual influences. The young Moorite circle that gathered at *fin-de-siècle* Cambridge believed that "nothing mattered except states of mind ... chiefly our own," as Keynes would write later in life.

"Passionate contemplation and communion"—preferably of art or, better yet, love—was the highest good in life, over money, ambition or politics. An agnostic's substitute for Christianity, Moore's philosophy offered the basis for the pursuit of a life outside of the business circles of the *belle époque*. Life, the young men believed, should be devoted to truth, friendship and love (and not only Platonically—Keynes and his male circle were constantly having affairs with one another), a world far removed from the "phenomenal" one of wealth and power. After Cambridge, Keynes joined the snobbishly bohemian Bloomsbury Group, whose rejection of Victorian values and pursuit of cultural and sexual radicalism suited him well.

Neo-Platonism may seem a strange creed for a practitioner of the dismal science. But Keynes' egoistic idealism taught him to value sublime experience, to see all of life as a pursuit of beauty. He once described his young set as "immoralists," saying that they did not think they needed to be bound by any rules. This ethos was not rooted in a blueblood background, but its attitude toward rigid Victorian moral codes was one of genteel condescension. When the bourgeois world imploded in World War I and the Great Depression, conservatives responded by clinging all the more desperately to the *laissez-faire* faith of the 19th century.

Keynes, by contrast, had no political stake in the market mystique, and so was prepared to reject it to save Cambridge from the abyss. (He did gamble the stock market, but mostly as an elegant hobby.) The world he loved was devoted to something other than making money; this freed him to rethink the entire way that capitalism, an economic system driven by the money motive, worked. What bourgeois

moralist could have written that the "love of money as a possession ... is a somewhat disgusting morbidity, one of those semi-criminal, semi-pathological propensities which one hands over with a shudder to the specialists in mental disease"? And who but a quasi-aristocrat could have conceived of an economy driven by demand and desire, instead of patient saving?

Keynes wrote *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*, his greatest book, at the depth of the Great Depression. It was published in 1936, making it all the more amazing that, while mocking and irreverent, *The General Theory* is an essentially optimistic book about the possibility of reform, the reconcilability of contradictions. The policy argument of *The General Theory* is that the capitalist economies are driven by consumption, which, in turn, follows from employment. If demand falls to a low level because of mass unemployment, there is no self-correcting market mechanism. It is the responsibility of the state to find a way to make demand rise again—if need be, by investing and employing people itself.

But *The General Theory* also contains a darker vision of capitalism. Keynes painted a picture in which economic well-being rests upon the actions of irresponsible, nearly neurotic individuals. Entrepreneurs vacillate between frenzied excess and anxious withdrawal, taunted by fantasies of triumph and apocalypse. In boom times, their dreams of glory propel them to ever more ephemeral investments. In slumps, they refuse to commit, preferring to clutch at money's eternal promise of future riches, instead of constructing factories, inventions or skyscrapers.

In proper Bloomsbury fashion, Keynes nudged these stodgy hoarders to flout eco-

nomic morality, because their jumpy qualms about debt and bankruptcy could lead to disaster. Unlike Marx, Keynes had no interest in production, no real sense about politics and power, no vision of intractable difference or of struggle. For him, the problems of the Depression were melodramatic but hysterical, limited to the surface of events, and so ultimately curable if only people listened to good sense.

There was something evasive about *The General Theory's* bonhomie (young economists in the '30s referred to the book as a "Manifesto of Reason and Cheerfulness"). Keynes was always surprised when the implementation of his ideas met with any resistance at all. He did not think he needed to develop a politics appropriate to his worldview; indeed, he sought to distance himself from working-class politics and radicalism. Cambridge and Bloomsbury fed his political conservatism

**On his deathbed
Keynes reputedly said,
"I should have drunk
more champagne."**

(after Moore, Edmund Burke was his favorite philosopher). Writing against Communism in the mid-'20s, he denounced it as "a creed which, preferring the mud to the fish, exalts the boorish proletariat above the bourgeois and the intelligentsia who, with whatever faults, are the quality in life and surely carry the seeds of all human advancement."

This conservatism blinded Keynes to the radicalism of his own economics. Even though Keynes was never interested in economic planning—indeed, his Middle Way was devised to reduce political pressure for a planned economy—his economic ideas were viewed by many businessmen, in the '30s and later, as highly threatening. The portrayal of businessmen in *The General Theory* as incompetent and irrational hardly pleased many of them; still less the suggestion that full employment, not high profits, should be the ultimate social goal.

Keynes wrote that *The Road to Serfdom*, Friedrich Hayek's seminal anti-planning polemic, was a "grand book," and that he found himself in "deeply moved agreement" with nearly the whole book. But this did not spare him the barbs and pot-

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shots of market ideologues who saw the expansion of public works, the management of demand and the raising of wages as harbingers of creeping socialism. Other scholars more inclined to the left—like the Polish economist Michael Kalecki—could see that full employment would create serious political difficulties, since workers are more powerful in a tight labor market. Keynes, because of his hostility to the left, never understood why his economics should meet with hatred from the right.

The last volume of Skidelsky's biography covers the late years of Keynes' life, after the heart disease that would ultimately kill him at 63 had set in. His declining health is a counterpoint to the deepening global crisis of World War II, and his wartime labors are presented as a heroic race against time, with his ballerina wife, Lydia Lopokova, always at his side. Keynes had been a strategic pacifist for much of the '30s: "It is our duty to prolong peace, hour by hour, day by day, for as long as we can." But after the war began, he worked day and night for the British government, helping to devise financing plans for the war, negotiate Lend-Lease with the United States, and create the international financial institutions that would endure into the postwar era. After weeks of grueling work at Bretton Woods, he died in 1946.

Fighting for Freedom is closer to hagiography than the earlier volumes of the biography. Where they do a brilliant job of situating Keynes' individual life within his culture and milieu, *Fighting for Freedom* at times seems like a book about an economic Houdini, single-handedly leading Britain out of one fiscal trap after another. In part, this is because the book catalogues Keynes' achievements at the height of his powers and fame. But it is also, paradoxically, because Skidelsky is far more ambivalent about Keynes than he was when he began his biography.

Skidelsky has grown more conservative with the years, even joining the Conservative Party in 1992 (though he has since defected). No longer a believer in the Keynesian analysis, he's left in a strange position when assessing Keynes' legacy. As a result, Keynes comes off as an isolated virtuoso in *Fighting for Freedom*, his accomplishments seeming like nothing more than fluke works of genius. Gone

is the sense that they were part of a larger political moment.

One gets the sense that Skidelsky is seeking to reclaim Keynes as the architect of the Third Way, to tailor his ideas and rescue a hero for the era of Blair and Clinton. Skidelsky is careful to note all the ways that Keynes affirmed the verities of classical economics, to observe that Keynes believed investment responds to changes in interest rates, not only demand, and to point out the distance between Keynes and the architects of the British welfare state. This attempt to rescue Keynes for the Third Way (or the Middle Way) is not really successful.

On the one hand, Keynes did not exactly occupy a middle position between the right and the left. Unlike the Third Way today, he did not seek to modify a state sector with injections of the market.

He sought, rather, to defend an old world of high culture and leisure from political radicalism and social instability. He wound up instead creating something entirely new. Before Keynes, no one believed that government in a democratic society had a role to play in managing economic growth. After Keynes, this would be one of the hallmarks of democracy.

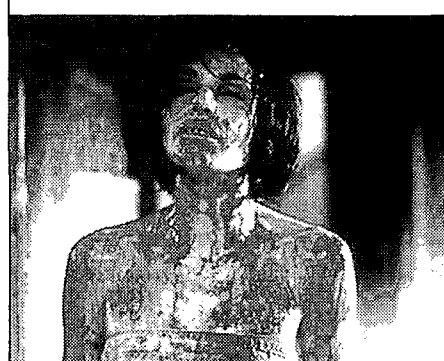
But in the future, liberal economics will be fought for—and won—not by latter-day gentleman-scholars, but by economists who are able to ally themselves with political forces devoted to equality, stability and securing the good life for all. Or, as Keynes put it, to a world where "for the first time since his creation man will be faced with his real, his permanent problem—how to use his freedom from pressing economic cares ... to live wisely and agreeably and well." ■

Acquired Tastes

By Julien Lapointe

A young woman, with an inviting stare, teasing lips and pale skin, accosts a lone truck driver by the roadside. She sits beside him, looks over

Trouble Every Day
Directed by Claire Denis



She's a maneater.

seductively, only to later leave his corpse, the neck chewed out, in a field. French filmmaker Claire Denis' *Trouble Every Day* is an atheist vampire film: Leaving out the supernatural, it believes only in the hollow beat of desire and addiction.

Coré (Béatrice Dalle) is compulsively cannibalistic, chasing after susceptible males and humming ecstatically as she digs

into their flesh—the girl can't help it. Her husband Léo (Alex Descas) is a watchful physician who tries, unsuccessfully, to keep her locked in while researching her affliction. Meanwhile, former colleague Shane (Vincent Gallo) travels to Paris in search of Léo, similarly stricken with the urge to gnaw away at his accompanying and unsuspecting wife June (Tricia Vessey).

Trouble Every Day moves slowly, almost monotonously. Graphically violent and unsettling, it casts a dry spell over its audience. Though one scene, erringly, borders on self-parody: Shane, about to climax with his wife, rushes into the bathroom and comes on the wall. Most audiences laugh: In this free-thinking society long adjusted to porn, nobody can take a money shot with a straight face.

Yet a pervading mood of stasis feeds into the drama. The characters spend an eternity watching, waiting. Shane fixates on his wife while she lies, eyes closed, in the bath. His wide glare looms over, threateningly. Denis doesn't spell his thoughts out till the end: Coupling with the maid, he eats her out, first figuratively, then literally. *Trouble* has very little dialogue—among the more abused forms of narrative and character exposition—and the paucity of information lends the film its shock. It isn't clear why Coré is being locked-up until we are

privity to an appallingly sensual scene halfway into the film.

In that episode, a young thieving intruder is lured by Coré, catching a glimpse of her eyes, lips and nightgown through the cracks of her barred door. He breaks in; she mounts him on the bed and mid-coital, tears his lips, neck and eye. As he dies painfully and loudly, she tenderly sips his blood. That's *Trouble* at its most unsettling: Coré devours sexually, without rhyme or reason. Denis scores the scene as an erotic interlude, to the ominous sound of a lullaby-like melody (the music is by Tindersticks). Sexual antagonism is revealed in its unmitigated volatility, the line between pain and pleasure, love and hate, abjection and elation now lost.

Shane and Coré have a one-dimensional and monomaniacal quality, stripped to a single, inexplicable impulse. Desire has rarely been so naked, shorn of morality. The premise, that human nature, unrepressed, is uncontrollably destructive, is reactionary—which is

precisely why the film is so painful. Denis deals these characterizations with a poker-face, leaving us to grapple with its misanthropic implications.

If Dionysian Coré is the film's anti-hero, Apollonian Shane comes closest to filling the role of a villain. Coré's frenzied killings possess an elemental integrity, her satiation at one point bleeding, in a moment of pathetic fallacy, into a crimson-red sky. Shane, by contrast, is all calculation. He chooses his victim with premeditation and his murder so unexceptionally reinforces gender-class hierarchies that its horror is both crude and schematic.

Some critics have tried to make metaphorical sense of the addiction-compulsion theme, taking their cue from vampire allegories of the past decade such as *Interview with the Vampire* and *The Addiction*. But if any film bears comparison here, it's Todd Haynes' *Safe*, whose narrative, despite satiric intent, remains stubbornly resistant to interpretation. Both

filmmakers are fascinated by disease, a subject they refuse to thematize, transforming it instead into a horrific, meaningless anomaly. Cannibalism therefore becomes, for Denis' film, a self-inflicted kiss of death: There's nothing more irksome to audiences (and many critics) than an evil that just won't speak its name.

Denis works with brief, suggestive snippets, keeping us at bay from all her characters, with the exception of June. It's June who most intimately invites our sympathy, her intuitive foreboding following the occasional, accidental clue. Strangely, she nurtures a close relationship with her husband's fluids; sitting alone in the bathroom, she sadly dips her finger in the puddle of come he has left behind. Later, he embraces her, post-kill, emerging from the shower. Though short on confessions, he nonetheless vows never to hurt her, while she spots a drop of blood running down the curtain. That's the defining moment of *Trouble Every Day*: knowing something's amiss, but not saying a word. ■

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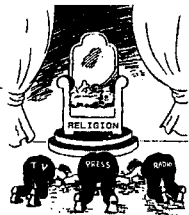
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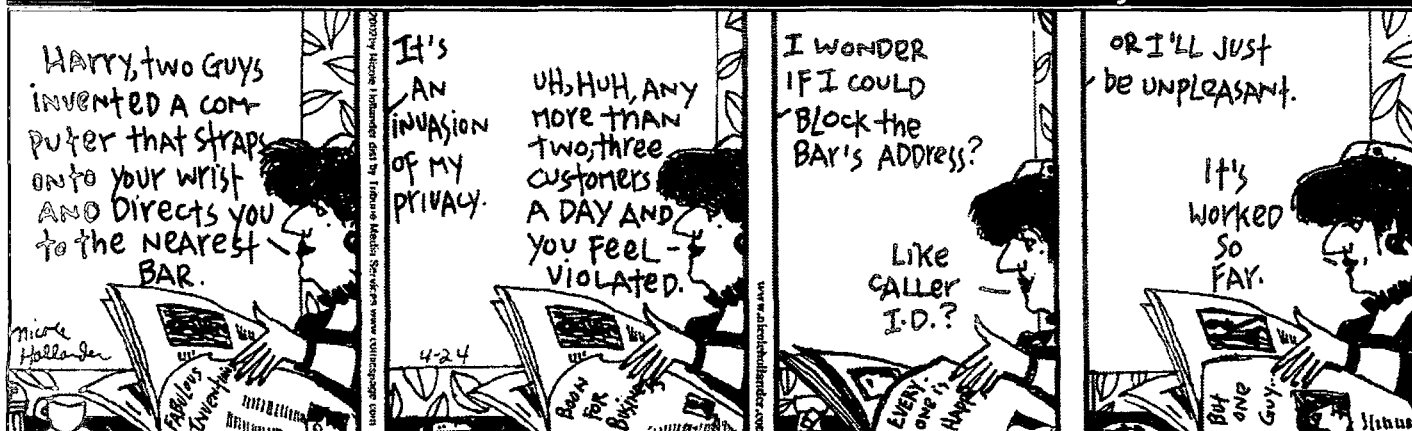
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SYLVIA

By Nicole Hollander



Continued from page 30

many small histories in which the great themes and challenges of the epoch are mixed together in distinctively complex biographies.

Over recent decades, historians have given new weight to such stories of "ordinary people" from the past, but Terkel has presented them to their contemporaries as well as preserving them for future historians' understanding. His guiding "North Star," Terkel says, has been Bertolt Brecht's poem, "Questions from a Worker Who Reads," which starts, "Who built Thebes of the seven gates? / In the books you will find the names of kings. / Did the kings haul up the lumps of rock?"



BILL BURKE

Terkel's humanism may seem old-fashioned, but it's what keeps him going.

Will the Circle Be Unbroken?

has all the Terkel hallmarks: a respect for human variety, a faith in human decency and a wonder at human resilience. Although there's frankness and revelation, Terkel doesn't seek out the weird, edgy, grating or provocative aspects of humanity. In a time of postmodernist obsession with irony, distance, cynicism, doubt and disbelief, Terkel's humanism (and gentle populism) may seem old-fashioned, but it's what keeps him going at age 90. And it helps to explain his latest project, a book on hope, for which he is interviewing people ranging from Staughton Lynd, the veteran advocate of workplace democracy, to conservative Republican Congressman Dan Burton, as well as many people you've never heard of before.

In his trademark red-checkered shirt, with an old red sweater and plaid wool shirt keeping out the chill of a cranky Chicago spring, Terkel hardly seems hopeful as he sits down with his favored martini to rail against Bush and Sharon over the deteriorating Middle East, noting with little satisfaction that Gore would probably have been no better (except on domestic matters). The voices in his books are ultimately optimistic, but given his view of the state of the world, how hopeful is he personally? What sustains his hopes? For the next hour and a half he bounces around the question, apologizing for not answering it, but ultimately coming down cautiously for hope.

"I don't want to seem a pollyanna," he says. "I use the word 'guardedly'—'guardedly' is a cover-up word—guardedly hopeful. The big problem is the means of communication. I'm rambling, avoiding your question about hope, because my feelings are quite frankly mixed. There's the question of time, time working against us. The information we get is funneled more and more by fewer and fewer. ... We have the means of information funneled down to practically nothing. How do people get the facts?

I have a feeling that deep down people are disturbed by what Bush is doing, that there's a feeling that something is cock-eyed here. It's getting at that feeling. It's the grassroots I'm talking about."

There are times when he has been more hopeful. "You know who Norman Corwin is?" he asks, referring to yet another interview subject for his new book. "He was a great writer of radio. On May 8, 1945, it was my wife's birthday. We were sitting at dinner. Seven o'clock Chicago time. The program was going on the air. VE-Day, the Nazis surrendered. There was this program 'On a Note of Triumph' by Norman Corwin. I said, 'Will you please turn that on.' And we forgot supper. It was fantastic."

It was also a time of great contradictions: The United Nations was forming, but the

United States would soon drop the atomic bomb, and later the Cold War would chill more than just Terkel's own career. But Terkel doesn't share the current World War II nostalgia. "And we come to my favorite whipping boy, that phrase, 'the greatest generation.' If there ever were a phony phrase, a three-dollar bill of a phrase, it's accepted that the World War II veterans were the greatest generation. By its very nature, it's a putdown of other generations. I think the '60s had that wiped all out. The '60s was the flowering of the civil rights movement and other movements, the feminist movement and the real challenge to that virulent disease, homophobia. You could call that the greatest generation, but there is no greatest generation."

"I feel less hopeful than May 8, 1945, and less hopeful than the '60s," he continued, "but if I don't have hope I might as well call it a day and have 50 martinis and two dozen Seconals."

Since September 11, there has been a new evocation of Pearl Harbor and a "good war" against terrorism, but Terkel thinks that Americans view history through a parochial lens. "There's no comparison," he argued. "Pearl Harbor was immediately evoked, but how come August 6, 1945, [when the United States dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima] wasn't? That's what changed the world, not Pearl Harbor."

Indeed, Terkel—in rare agreement with *Time* magazine editors—sees Albert Einstein as the man of the past century, a great intellect whose work was used to produce technology he loathed. Einstein warned that in the aftermath of the bomb, "Everything has changed except how we think."

But terrorism itself is a tricky concept, Terkel suggests. "The Cold War is over, so terrorism has replaced communism as

the *bête noire*," he said. "To my mind comes a picture of a little girl, that most celebrated and horrendous picture of the Vietnam War, that naked little girl running down the road, terrified, a halo of napalm around her. She's terror stricken. Who has terrorized her? There's a little kid in a plane, a sweet little boy who is following his president's orders, Herr Kissinger's orders. Now that little girl is terrified. The little boy in the plane is the kid next door, doing his duty. He's gone to Sunday school. He's heard the Sermon on the Mount. He's doing his duty. Now he's a terrorist to that little girl."

Bush's invocation of an "axis of evil" is not only a diplomatic error—ignoring and endangering progress toward reconciliation in the Korean peninsula and toward a more moderate government in Iran—but a conceptual one. "The word 'evil' doesn't make any sense," Terkel contends. "There are loonies. There's a thing called lunacy that leads people to evil, a lunacy of power, the lunacy of bin Laden, but the little kid in the plane is the boy next door, though to the Vietnam people ..."

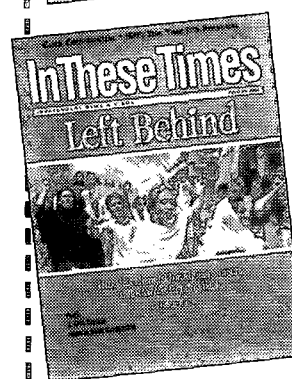
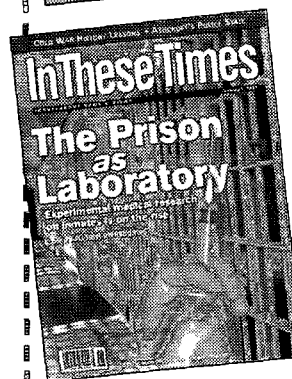
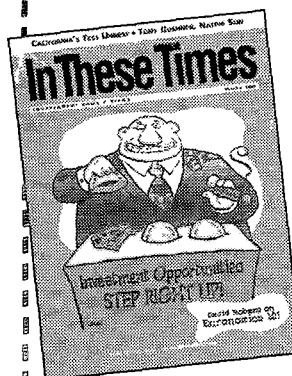
One reason that Terkel avoids labeling people as "evil" is that he carries a vision of personal transformation and redemption at the heart of his hopefulness, an Enlightenment belief that people are fundamentally decent and that, through education and encounter with others, they can find common solutions. Over the decades of interviewing, his favorite subject has been a Ku Klux Klansman, a poor white southerner named C.P. Ellis, who "was taught all his life that the reason he was miserable was because of those 'son-of-a-bitch niggers.' Through the years he made the discovery [that wasn't true]. The C.P. Ellis interview was the most hopeful I've ever done. Of course, people can change, for God's sake."

If he has a favorite interview, he has a hard time picking a single book he would preserve for posterity. "I don't know. The Depression book, *Hard Times*, but *Working*, some would say. I got a kick out of doing my crazy memoir, *Talking to Myself*. Maybe the Depression because I was of that age, a hopeful time, when the New Deal and WPA came in."

He does, however, have a favorite candidate. As a partisan of Henry Wallace in 1948, then an ambivalent initial backer of Nader's candidacy in 2000, Terkel is convinced that a third party presidential bid is hopeless, but he is an enthusiastic supporter of Cleveland Congressman Dennis Kucinich as the next Democratic standard-bearer. "He speaks a language that's simple and plain," Terkel says. "He can win back the blue-collar Reagan Democrats. He's one of them. He's Croatian from deer hunter territory. He's the kind of person who could, like Billy Rose the Broadway producer said, put bubbles in your blood."

Coming away from his book on death, Terkel says that he was awed by the "complexity" of humanity. The interview process itself is fraught with complexity as well. In capturing a record of his subjects' lives and thoughts, Terkel also preserves something of himself. Rather than give his own assessment of mortality, he rushed upstairs, where stacks of books surround his bed, to find a volume of poems by Nobel laureate Wislawa Szymborska. He read "Hatred" and then what he saw as its counterpoint, "On Death, Without Exaggeration." It ends on a note affirming what Terkel embraces as "the permanence of life," which continues to animate his career as an oral historian: "In vain it tugs at the knob / of the invisible door. / As far as you've come / can't be undone." ■

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The People's Storyteller

By David Moberg

Studs Terkel is a busy man. On a Sunday afternoon, when I stopped by his house on a pleasant cul-de-sac in Chicago's Uptown neighborhood, he had just returned from lunch with writers Barbara Ehrenreich and Tom Geoghegan—having picked up some local Indian newspapers on his way out of the restaurant to get a feel for what's happening in that immigrant community. The week before, he'd been in New York to speak at a centenary reflection on John Steinbeck. He was flying out early Monday morning to New York to pay tribute to poet Gwendolyn Brooks, rushing back to Chicago by Wednesday for the annual Studs Terkel Award ceremony for local journalists, then leaving later in the month for Los Angeles. A few months ago, he had been on tour for his latest book; now he was already working on the next.

His crumpled calendar book was full of other entries, but one day in particular stood out and underscored the significance of that active schedule. On May 16, Terkel turns 90 years old, and his lifelong home city is sponsoring two birthday tributes to the man who is not only one of its most celebrated literary figures, but also a quirky and endearing persona who captures some of the fading romantic spirit of a metropolis that likes to think of itself as a "city of neighborhoods."

"Here's the crazy thing," Terkel reflects, "a guy who was blacklisted is now a half-assed iconic figure. It's funny. It's ironic. I'm not suggesting blacklisting as a career move for young people, but if it weren't for the blacklist, I wouldn't be doing these books, you see."

In the early '50s, Terkel was a pioneer with the small but influential "Chicago school" of television personalities, but he was also a person who "never saw a petition I didn't like." His political commitments narrowed his broadcast options to a local FM radio station. But with the encouragement of publisher Andre Schiffrin, he translated his gift for interviewing from the airwaves to the printed page, producing over the

years a collection of oral histories, including *Working, Hard Times, Race, Division Street*. The Great Divide, "The Good War" (which won the Pulitzer prize) and, most recently, *Will the Circle Be Unbroken? Reflections on Death, Rebirth, and Hunger for a Faith* (The New Press).

Covering roughly 75 years of American history, Terkel's books capture the experiences and reflections of a cross-section of Americans—a few famous, most of them little-known, many from poor or working-class backgrounds on some of the great issues of their time, or in some cases, of any time. These assembled personal tales do not constitute a grand, explanatory narrative, but they are a reminder that history is lived through

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